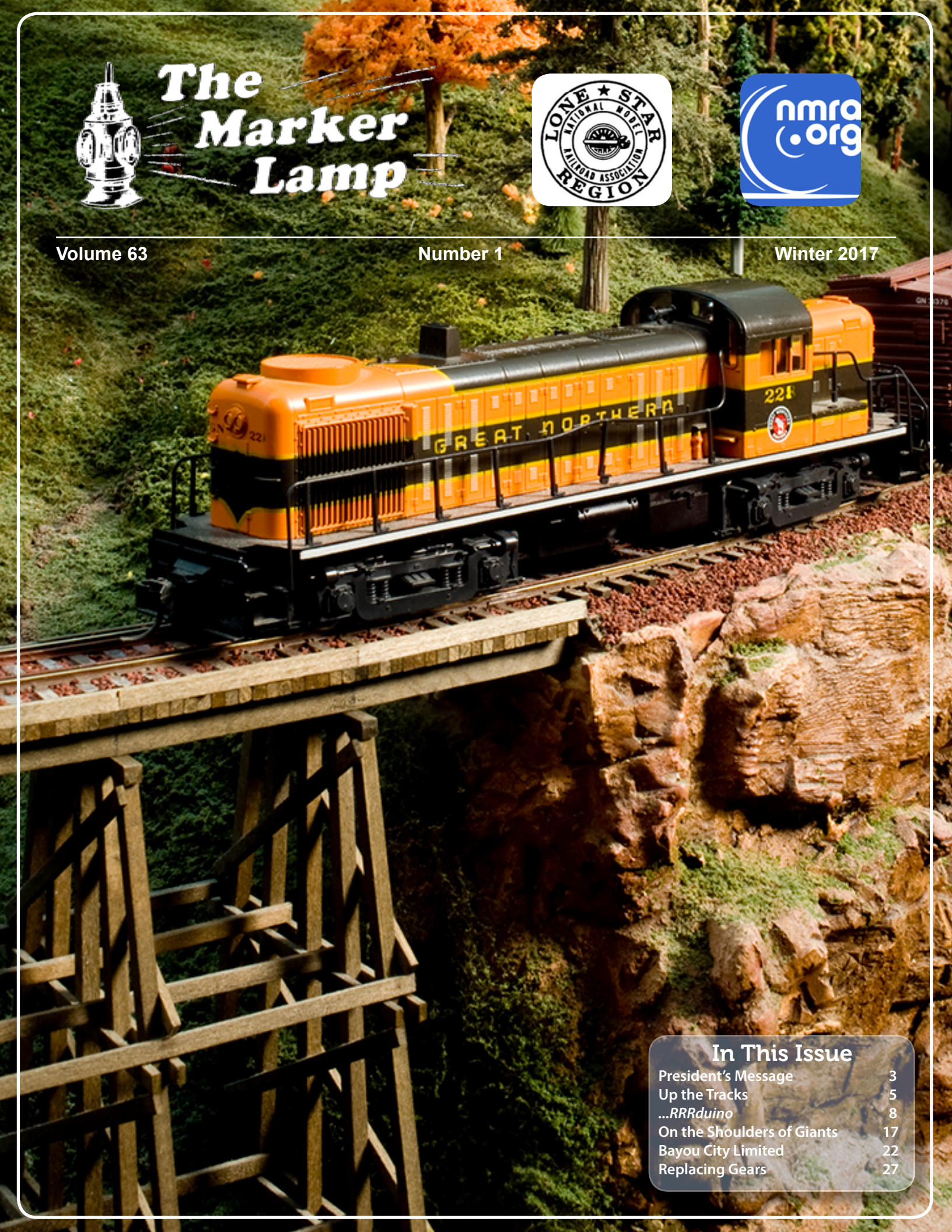

Volume 63 Number 1 Winter 2017

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The Marker Lamp

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The Lone Star Region of the
National Model Railroad Association

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Address all correspondence, news, photos and drawings to the editor. All material will be gladly accepted and will be used depending on the availability of space and suitability of material. None will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. Correspondence relating to Pike Ads and Dealer Ads should be addressed to Donna Orr, 2625 Rolling Meadows Dr., Rockwall, TX 75087 (972) 722-4769 dlo-rls@sbcglobal.net

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President's Message

by Steve Barkley, MMR
baylormax@aol.com

The last year has been a good year for the Lone Star Region. These are some highlights:

The Lone Star Region 2016 Annual Convention was held in Arlington, Texas. About 200 modelers attended including many family and youth members. The convention returned a small profit to the two host LSR divisions.

The convention featured a model contest, a silent auction, clinics for both modelers and spouses, and lots of time to socialize with fellow modelers. All had a good time.

The 2017 convention will be in Houston. The website for the 2017 convention should soon be active.

The Cost of Membership

One of our Division Directors who is also a college student raised his concern about the cost of NMRA membership. This is a very real issue that should be carefully considered by the NMRA Board.

Student membership is now $38.00 per year including the magazine. This can be a significant cost to a student if his or her parents are not helping meet the cost.

Then consider the cost of regular adult memberships. It now costs $72.00 per year for an adult including the magazine. Without the magazine it costs $44.00.

I understand that the average age of our adult membership is near 65. Many are retired and on fixed incomes. My experience is that older members are much more sensitive to the cost of their memberships whether that is justified by their personal situation.

At the same time, the cost of model railroad products and other train magazines continues to rise. Model Railroader is now $42.95 per year.

We should remember the law of Supply and Demand. Simply put, as the cost of an item rises the demand for it drops. A corollary states that there is a similar relationship between the costs of other products and demand for a similar item.

As the cost of other model magazines rises we should expect to see a decline in NMRA and LSR membership. For that matter, model railroading is not a necessity of life. As our membership perceives that they must curtail spending, then model railroading related expenditures may be the first to go.

So what may be some solutions?

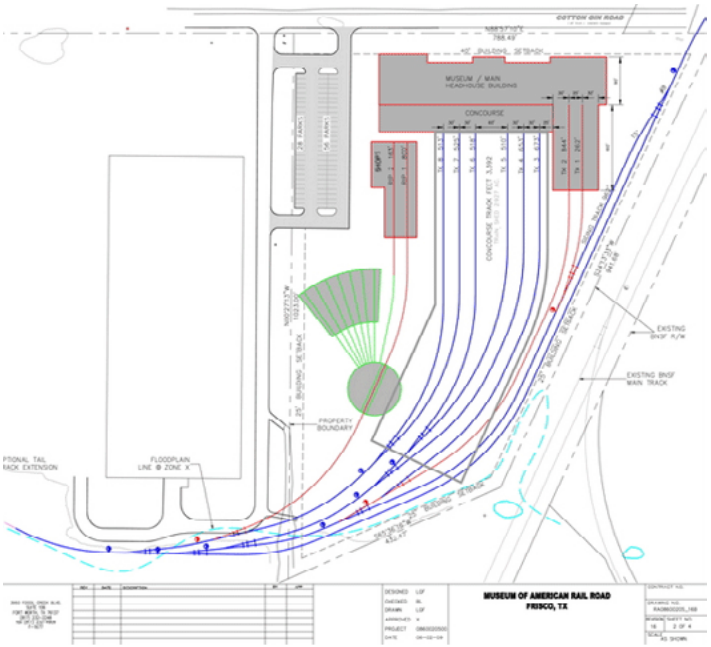
1. Work with the NMRA Headquarters and White River Productions to expand the demand for the NMRA Magazine. Can it be combined with some of the SIG's publications?
2. Cut costs. Is the NMRA top heavy? What is the actual cost of administration and can it be reduced? The LSR has no paid employees and very few organization costs.
3. Why is full NMRA membership $72.00 per year? I suggest that we ask that the NMRA budget be published each year so that the membership can see where the money goes.

I've been a member for well over 25 years and a model railroader for much longer than that. I have enjoyed my NMRA membership. I am sensitive to comments that I hear from LSR members about costs.

Visiting Frisco

by Riley Triggs
rileytriggs@gmail.com
ponyrr.blogspot.com
modelrailroaddesign.blogspot.com

The re-relocated Houston & Texas Central Railroad depot moved from Fair Park in Dallas to the new Frisco town center complex.



The site plan showing storage tracks and future roundhouse and museum buildings. From the Museum of American Railroads web site.

I stopped by the site of the forthcoming Museum of the American Railroad in Frisco, TX recently, which took me by surprise. I hadn't visited the collection since they moved to their new 12 acre facility, and while it wasn't open at the time, I was impressed with the magnitude of the endeavor ahead of them.

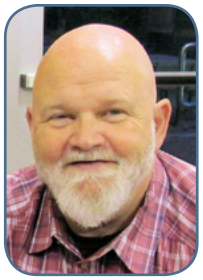
It was great to see, even through the fence, the collection spread out in contrast to the old Fair Park setting. Plans for the site include a new station and shed building recalling the razed Boston North Station of 1893. Kind of an interesting choice given the differences in Dallas and Boston, but maybe it is a calculate move for becoming a museum that tells the story of railroads of the entire United States.

The setting for this new museum is interesting as well. The City of Frisco has grouped its governmental offices, retail, residential and a Discovery Center to form their new Frisco Center.

While it is always good to have the presence of history, it seems most of the history found in Frisco is a recreation, appropriation or relocation of historic artifacts, which results in an odd Disneyesque feeling in the newly formed town center.

I'm not sure how I feel about what Frisco is doing overall yet, but I'm pretty excited about the potential of having a world class Museum of the American Railroad.

Riley



Up The Tracks

By Bill Dryden NMRA & LSR Life Member

Here are upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the NMRA Scale Rails and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me via e-mail at bdr149@airmail.net.

Lone Star Region 66th Annual Convention (2017)
The Convention will be June 7 - 11 at the Westchase Hilton in Houston, TX.
Please keep checking the website at http://bayoucitylimited.org/
Come all!!
PARTICIPATE!!!

RECURRING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

LSR Division 3 - Northeast Texas Division – Allen
The Trinity River Division meets on the Second Saturday of every month at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Allen. Occasionally the day or branch changes due to scheduling conflicts so pay close attention to the e-mail meeting notices that go out a week before the meeting. If you would like to be added to the e-mail list contact Jerry Hoverson At JKHoverson@gmail.com.

LSR Division 4 – Cen-Tex Division – Austin
The Cen-Tex Division meets bi-monthly at the Austin Northwest Recreational Center, 2913 Northland Drive, Austin, TX. Meetings are held at 10:00 am on the Second Saturday of the odd months and include clinics, show-and-tell, DCC minute, social activities and a layout open house. For more information about upcoming meetings, see http://centexnmra.org or contact director@centexnmra.org to be added to the mail list.

Alamo Model Railroad Engineers - San Antonio
The Alamo Model Railroad Engineers meets the 2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Zucht Building at the Texas Transportation Museum, 11791 Wetmore Rd., San Antonio TX. For more information call Peter Shavney (210) 317-3661 or Gene Turner (210) 355-2777; or visit the web site www.alamomodelrailroadengineers.com.

Houston Area Live Steamers
HALS has over 9,000 feet of track for you to enjoy and ride on most any Saturday of the year. Someone is usually there every Saturday with special run, operations, waybills/timetable, work and fun run days scheduled throughout the year. Our public run days are the third Saturday of the month March through November. Come see our 2,500 foot expansion in Phase 4. Model Railroaders (any scale) are welcome to attend most any time. Check our web site out at www.hals.org for schedule of events or e-mail Rick White – rick.white.jr@gmail.com for more information.

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs – Irving
The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Visit the website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site or member clubs.

New Braunfels Railroad Museum
Kids Fun Day is held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. New Braunfels Railroad Museum, 302 South San Antonio Street, in the 1907 Restored Railroad Depot; New Braunfels, TX. Museum phone (830) 627-2447. Kids of all ages will have the opportunity to run model trains and become a Jr. Engineer. Also among the displays at the Kids Fun Day will be a large US Army Model Garden (G) Scale and Lego Trains. Visit our Steam Engine, Caboose, Dining Car (available for Birthday Parties) and Box Car. There will be other fun, train related activities, additional model trains, train artifacts, our 1907 depot are on display. The Railroad Museum opens at 10:00 am on Saturdays. For field trip scheduling and more information, call Howard Young (210) 542-6121, or visit us at www.nbrrm.org.

Texas Western Model Railroad Club – Forest Hills
The Texas Western Model Railroad Club meets for its business meeting every 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM. The Club is located at 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. For more information: (682) 587-2092 or www.twmrc.org or email cdo@twmrc.org.

EVENTS AND SHOWS

February

18th
Greater Houston Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Stafford Centre, 10505 Cash Road @ Murphy Road, Stafford, TX. More information: http://www.sanjacmodeltrains.org/.

March – April
(Multiple Date Event)

Mar. 31st – Apr. 2nd; 7th – 9th
Day Out With Thomas. (Sponsored in part by the Museum of the American Railroads, Frisco, Texas). Times TBD. Admission TBD. Grapevine Vintage Railroad Depot, 705 South Main Street, Grapevine, TX. More information: (817) 410-3185 or http://www.museumoftheamericanrailroad.org/.

April

8th – 9th
New Braunfels Spring Jamboree & Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults $8, Ages 5-13 $2, Kids Under 5: Free. New Braunfels Civic Center, 375 South Castell Avenue, New Braunfels, TX (Exit 187 on I-35). More information: www.nbrrm.org.

May

6th – 7th
Austin Area Train Show. Saturday 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Adults $7, children under 12 free with adult. Clinics and self-guided layout tour included. Williamson County Expo Center, 210 Carlos G. Parker Blvd, Taylor, TX (just minutes past Dell Diamond). For more information, visit https://centexnmra.org/trainshow.

20th – 21st
Jefferson's Train Days Celebration and Model Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults $6, children under 6 Free (Includes layout tour of R.D. Moses T&P Model Railroad). Separate Train Days activities requiring separate admission fee include Historic Jefferson Railway narrow gauge train ride and Jay Gould's business car "ATALANTA" guided tour. (Discounts available for multiple admissions) More information contact the Museum at (866) 398 – 2038 or (903) 665 – 2775, or www.jeffersonmuseum.com, www.jeffersontraindays.com and www.jeffersonrailway.com.

20th – 21st
Cotton Belt Historical Society; Tyler TAP Chapter Annual Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults $6, children under 12 Free. Harvey Convention Center, 2000 West Front Street, Tyler, TX More information: www.cottonbeltdepotmuseum.com.

September October

Sep. 30th – Oct. 1st
Fall Plano Train Show (Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs) Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adults $8, Kids Under 12 Free with Paid Adult Admission, Scouts & Scout Leaders in Uniform, Admission is Free. Plano Centre; 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway; Plano, TX.
For more information: www.dfwtrainshows.com.

October

7th – 8th
Texas Western Model Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults $8, Kids Under 12: Free. Forest Hill Civic Center, 6901 Wichita Street, Forest Hill, TX. More information: www.twmrc.org.

Excursion Train Trips

Austin Steam Train; Cedar Park, TX; (512) 477-8468; www.austinsteamtrain.org

Grapevine Vintage Railroad; Grapevine, TX; (817) 410-3185; www.gvrr.com

Old Hickory Railroad; Jackson, LA; (225) 634-7397; www.louisianasteamtrain.com

Texas State Railroad; Palestine & Rusk, TX; (888) 987-2461; www.texasstaterr.com

Please consider our deadlines for submitals and publications to allow adequate lead time to correctly announce your event – Column submission deadlines are the 15th of January, April, July and October; publication of the Marker Lamp is the middle of the following month.

...RRRduino...

by Speed
www.TxNamib.com

Onn 4 Device Universal Remote for $2.64

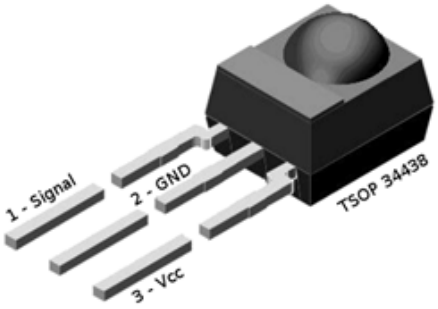
Arduino

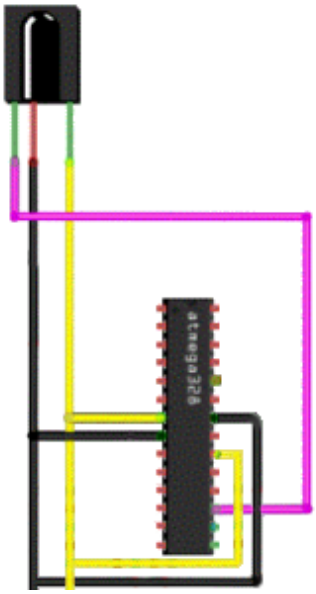
Controlled by a TV remote?

Now that we can move servo's, turn LEDs and relays on and off, wouldn't it be nice to have some control over them from afar without a computer, or for that matter, not even using cables?

How 'bout just using a simple TV remote control? Well, there are plenty of websites explaining how a TV remote works, and we could all imagine that there is some magic in the pulses that the infrared emitter is sending across the air from your hand to the other side...so, let's keep it simple and grab a device that will decode all those pulses and make our Arduino do something useful!

Vishay makes a 38 kHz IR sensor, the TSOP34438 that can be bought from Mouser for a mere $1.27. It has three pins, Power (Vcc, pin 3), Ground (or





Pin 1 from TSOP34438 to pin 17 on ATMEGA328P (D11 on Arduino) shown in purple

common, pin 2) and the Signal, (or output, pin 1). The 34438 works with supply voltages from 2.5 V to 5.5 Vdc, so perfect for an Arduino that can provide 5 V or 3.3 V.

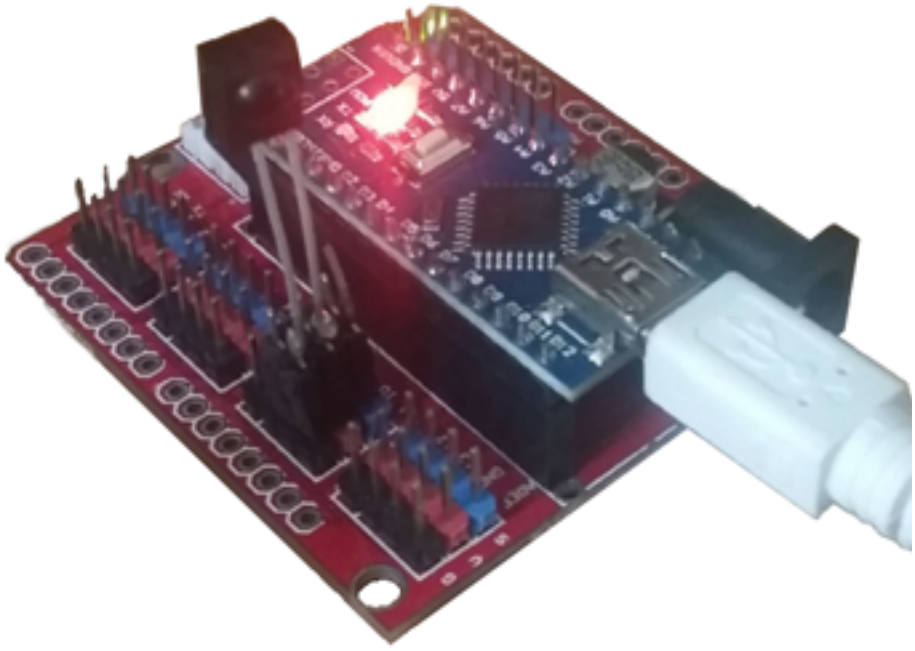
Since low budget is important too, we also buy the least expensive TV remote control at our local store, like the Onn 4 Device Universal Remote for $2.64. You might already have a spare remote handy from an unused television, and if it emits data on a 38 kHz carrier, you are in business. How would you know? You connect the TSOP to your Arduino, load the code shown below and open the Serial Port Monitor to let the Arduino show you the codes as you press the buttons. If you can get the same codes for the same buttons and enough different codes between different buttons, the remote passes the test.

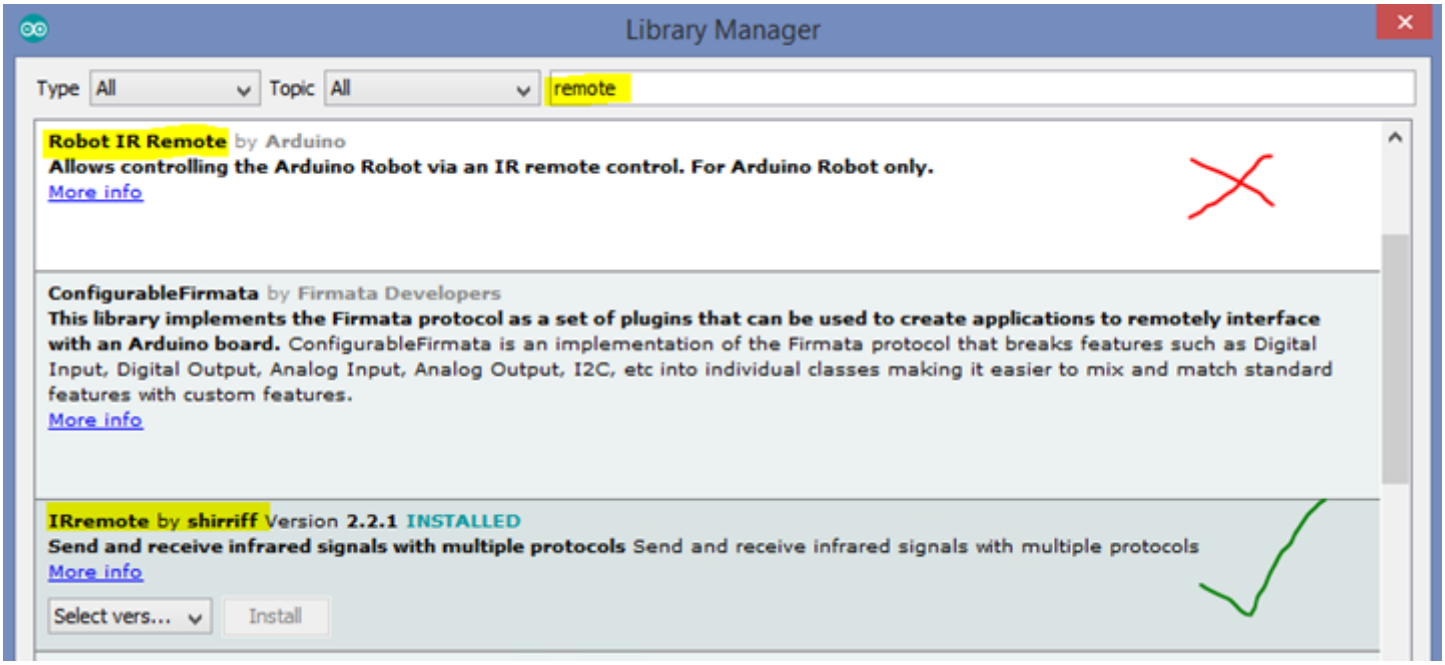
We connect the 34438 with the signal pin (pin 1, on the left if the dome is facing you) to the Arduino's D11 pin. The middle pin goes to ground (black, shown below) and the 3rd pin, on the right (yellow), connects to 5 V.

Speed-Tip: ***if you have an Arduino Uno, you could also simply plug the TSOP34438 into the Arduino connector with pin 1 going to Arduino pin 11 and then you output a LOW on pin 10 and a HIGH on pin 9, for GND and Vcc, no wiring needed!***

In order to use the Arduino library to read the values from the TSOP34438, you would need to install the IRremote library by downloading this file https://github.com/z3t0/Arduino-IRremote/archive/master.zip. Extra thanks to Ken Shirriff. I tried the `Sketch > Include Library > Manage Libraries...` route, but got some CRC errors, so I simply downloaded the file and use `Sketch > Include Library > Add .ZIP library` pointing it to the downloaded file. You also need to move the RobotIRremote folder from C:\Program Files (x86)\Arduino\libraries\RobotIRremote to somewhere else than libraries, since it also contains an IRremote library which is not what we need. After moving the RobotIRremote folder, restart the Arduino IDE again.

One special thing to know, this IR library uses Timer2 on the ATMEGA chip to read the data coming from the TSOP34438, so you won't be able to use all the PWM pins as you did before. Timer2 controls PWM pins 3 and 11, so you need to avoid using these now as PWM pins.




Library Manager
Type All
Topic All
remote
Robot IR Remote by Arduino
Allows controlling the Arduino Robot via an IR remote control. For Arduino Robot only.
More info
ConfigurableFirmata by Firmata Developers
This library implements the Firmata protocol as a set of plugins that can be used to create applications to remotely interface with an Arduino board. ConfigurableFirmata is an implementation of the Firmata protocol that breaks features such as Digital Input, Digital Output, Analog Input, Analog Output, I2C, etc into individual classes making it easier to mix and match standard features with custom features.
More info
IRremote by shirriff Version 2.2.1 INSTALLED
Send and receive infrared signals with multiple protocols Send and receive infrared signals with multiple protocols
More info
Select vers...
Install

Code for data to show TV remote codes in Serial Port Monitor (Ctrl-Shift-M):

```
// IRremote: receiving IR codes to display on
//     Serial Port ( Ctrl-Shift-M )

#include <IRremote.h>
#include <Servo.h>

#define VERSION "My first IR project, 0.01"

//     remote #defines goes here

#define LED_PIN          13
#define IR_RECEIVE_PIN   11
#define GND_PIN          10
#define VCC_PIN           9

#define SIGNAL_PIN        6
#define SERVO_PIN         5

#define SERVOLEFT        75
#define SERVORIGHT      105
#define SERVOCNTR        90

Servo myServo;
IRrecv myReceiver( IR_RECEIVE_PIN ); // receive on pin 11
decode_results code;

void setup() {
  pinMode( LED_PIN, OUTPUT ); digitalWrite( LED_PIN, HIGH );
  pinMode( GND_PIN, OUTPUT ); digitalWrite( GND_PIN, LOW );
  pinMode( VCC_PIN, OUTPUT ); digitalWrite( VCC_PIN, HIGH );

  Serial.begin( 115200 );
  myReceiver.enableIRIn(); // set the receiver up

  myServo.attach( SERVO_PIN );   myServo.write( SERVOCNTR );
  pinMode( SIGNAL_PIN, OUTPUT ); digitalWrite( SIGNAL_PIN, LOW );

  delay( 200 );
  Serial.println( VERSION );
  digitalWrite( LED_PIN, LOW );
} // setup
```

```
void loop() {
  if ( myReceiver.decode( &code ) ) {
    digitalWrite( LED_PIN, HIGH );

 // switch goes here ...

    myReceiver.resume();
    digitalWrite( LED_PIN, LOW );
  } // if
} // loop

/****************************** END OF FILE **********************
***********/
```

And shown in the Serial Port Monitor, pressing **UP**, **DOWN**, **LEFT and then RIGHT**:

```
My first IR project, 0.01
20DF00FF  > up
20DF807F  > down
20DFC03F  > left
20DF40BF  > right
```

So all we need to do now is capture those codes in our code, and make the Arduino do something with them!

At the top:

```
#define REMOTE_UP         0x20DF00FF
#define REMOTE_DOWN       0x20DF807F
#define REMOTE_LEFT       0x20DFC03F
#define REMOTE_RIGHT      0x20DF40BF
```

And then we replace the comment shown as "// switch goes here ..." with

```
 switch( code.value ) {
  case REMOTE_UP:
   digitalWrite( SIGNAL_PIN, HIGH );
   Serial.println( "UP" );
   break;
  case REMOTE_DOWN:
   digitalWrite( SIGNAL_PIN, LOW );
   Serial.println( "DOWN" );
   break;
  case REMOTE_LEFT:
   myServo.write( SERVOLEFT );
   Serial.println( "<-" );
   break;
  case REMOTE_RIGHT:
   myServo.write( SERVORIGHT );
   Serial.println( "->" );
   break;
  default:
   Serial.println( code.value, HEX );
   break;
 } // switch
```

And now the left and right buttons on the remote will move the servo left and right; and the up and down buttons will turn the signal LED on and off.

When you keep the remote button in, you will notice a whole bunch of FFFFFFFF's being produced, think how you could make use of that....maybe the first press let the servo move, but when you hold the button in it locks it...Dispatcher, may I have the main line again, pretty please?

All the code above are online at www.TxNamib.com in the ***Rrrduino*** department, scroll down to the *Marker Lamp* section.

Division 3 are building HO buses that have a magnet on the steering system following a wire or magnet strip, just like the Faller Car System, but to change the motor speed and turn the headlights, indicators or hazards on, we use a TV remote! Search for TxCar on the same website. ML

Approach

By Duane Richardson, MMR
duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

Another train show season is behind us here in North Texas. My club is planning a trip up to St. Louis for the Sn3 Symposium in the spring. As I write this we have put our Sn3 club layout up for sale and have been talking about what we will build next. While I hate to see it go there is just isn't anything left for us to do on it and with nothing to build, most of the guys are ready to move on to a new project. Who knows where the next project will lead us but it's safe to say that we'll have a good time along the way.

Since we are approaching the planning stages of a new layout I wanted to talk a bit here on, what I have found, is the best approach to building a new layout. In a fit of excitement, we tend to jump right in and start building bench work as soon as we know what the basic shape of the layout will be. This presents a lot of problems that will only make life harder on you as you proceed with your layout. Do you have to have a completed track plan before you start? It certainly helps. If you at least know the route your mainline will take, then that is enough but it really helps to know as much as you can about what will be where before you start building your bench work. You know need to know this for a couple of reasons.

First, you need to be able to allow for any grades in your mainline and second it allows you to know where all your turnouts will be and to not have a brace directly where a switch motor needs to be. Another important reason is that you need to know where all your lighting will need to go.

Once you know where the bench work will be I've found it helpful to tape it off on the floor. Like many, I tend to find that space is at a premium and I have never had the luxury of working in a completely empty room. By taping off the bench work I know what my aisle space will look like and if I have to store things in the train room I can have it under where the bench work will be. Admittedly, this is more for organization than anything else. As the bench work goes up the tape can be removed. This step can give you a really good idea of how the room will look and maybe help you identify where you might have space issues for your operators. It's better to find this out now instead of later when you have spent time and money building bench work only to find that the space that looks okay on paper is really too small for 2 people to stand in when you are running trains.

The first really truly required step is to install the lighting first. This is why it is important to know what will be where so you know how to illumi-

nate it. This is also really important if you plan on accenting certain areas of the layout with special lighting.

If you plan to just run some florescent lights then there isn't much to do but being able to install the lighting without having to work around standing bench work is very helpful since you will, more than likely, be moving ladders around to install it. If you are paying an electrician to install your lighting, then it's going to cost you more because they charge by the hour and it will take them longer if they have to work around things. Not to mention that you might get 'special pricing' for making it a difficult install (the 'putting up with you' tax).

"Good quality materials pay off in the long run."

The second step, once the lighting is installed, is to put up your backdrop. Not having to lean over bench work to paint a backdrop is a huge benefit. If you are using anything that needs to be glued to the backdrop like most 2-D printed backdrops, the wallpaper type backdrops like those sold by Backdrop Warehouse or even photo backdrops, it's better that these be added before the bench work gets in the way. The larger prints, like the wallpaper type backdrops, can be hard to man handle and having bench work in the way only adds to the difficulties.

Our lights are in and the backdrop is up. Now it's time for bench work. There are so many different ways to build bench work. From observations and practical experience, I have found that making my bench work from 2x4s works the best. 2x4s are cheaper, straighter and stronger than 1x4s. They are also twice as wide so it makes mounting your fascia easier as well. I also like to use 2x4s for risers for many of the same reasons. Yes, it's overkill but, again, it's easier to use, straighter and above all cheaper. I use either 3x4 cabinet grade plywood or splined roadbed. The cabinet grade is more expensive but you get next to no voids between the layers. You can use Marine grade or Baltic Birch plywood but the cost goes up a lot for these. Good quality materials pay off in the long run. I know a modeler who built his layout on fence pickets because they were cheaper. It also meant working on his layout was a constant fight with splinters. Try to avoid falling into the trap of reusing all sorts of left over lumber. It can be cheaper to do I so and believe me, I understand that side of it but if you are trying to hold up a layout you don't want material that has a bunch of holes in it that weakens the structure. You also don't want to be working around nails, splinters and such either.

Another thing that I have learned along the way is that I do not like to drive screws down from the top of the layout for any reason. I attach risers to the roadbed with L brackets or I make a block from 1x4 that does basically the same thing. This allows me to drive all the screws from the bottom. If you ever change your mind and have to move something this will easily allow that to happen. If you have ever played 'Find the Screw Under the Scenery' then you know what I'm talking about. A place people run into trouble with driving screws down into it from the top is that this creates a dimple in the Homosote that can cause a low spot in your track. If you get short screws and drive them from the bottom (just make sure they don't go through the top of the roadbed) then you won't have that problem.

I still like to use Homosote for a roadbed material. Yes, the problems with the product are well known but for me it's still my go to material. Several in the Region have

started using other materials, like Micore-300, but I haven't used them enough to talk about them here. With Homosote I know I'll have to level it and it's messy to work with but I'm used to that part. The most critical step with Homosote is that you want to seal it on ALL sides. I go to the local Home Center and buy a gallon of paint from what they call the 'Oops' section. These are cans of paint that didn't come out the color the customer wanted. You can usually find a gallon in some shade of brown or one that they can add color to and make it brown. You really don't care too much since the purpose of this is to seal the material. Any unpainted surface can draw moisture from the air, or during the scenery process, and cause the material to swell.

The next step is to actually lay the track. It doesn't matter if you use flex track or hand lay the track the one thing you need to make very certain of is that the roadbed is level. In modeling any railroad, but especially in narrow gauge, I like to have some 'side to side' sway in my track work. Really straight track operates really nicely but just doesn't look real. The side to side sway is easily done but you really can't have any up and down in the track. Uneven track work leads to accidental uncoupling of your trains. This is usually an unwanted feature for most modelers (unless you are Gomez Adams). I do NOT like to solder every rail joint. I will solder joiners in curves but that's about it. Moving or replacing track becomes problematic if you solder every joint and if you have locked all the joints together it leaves the rail no way to expand and contract with temperature changes (this is import if your layout lives in a garage or some sort of location that isn't climate controlled. You can have scale 'sun kinks' if the rail can't move with the changes.

So…our lights are up, the backdrop is in place as is our bench work and track. What's next? Unless you have jumped onboard to pioneer battery power in your locomotives we need to wire the layout. Wire comes in various gauges and comes as a solid piece of copper or stranded. Both have their purposes. I like stranded myself but this is another 'to each their own' situation. Neither option is wrong. There are, however, a few things that I have found over the years that can be really helpful when wiring a layout. First, I wire each town like you would a modular layout. I place terminal blocks on each end of town and everything is wired from one block to the next. This allows me to isolate a town easily if I am chasing a short or installing something new. This is also handy should you find you have to take your layout down and move it. The biggest advantage to doing it this way is that every town can have the same wiring scheme. For example, if you have Red and Black wire for your buss you can have a 'Red in the Front, Black in the Black' scheme. That way the rail nearest you is always red. When running your mainline you will have to turn complete 180 degree turns which then flips the wiring. If you wire each town from block to block, all you have to keep track of is to plug the wire into the correct spot on the terminal blocks. This does mean that sometime you might have a situation where the colors have flipped like this but make a note as to why and attach it to the layout by that terminal block. Trust me; this will make chasing shorts or opens MUCH easier. Also, the absolute biggest favor you can do for yourself is to pick a color code for your layouts wiring and STICK TO IT! Red/Black flipping to Green/Purple and then flipping to Grey with a green trace/Yellow or whatever becomes a nightmare fast. I realize that sometime we have to work with what we have but this one is one of the biggest issues I have found when I get a call saying, "I have a short on my layout and I just can't figure out where" and then we have to crawl under and figure out what is where (and why). We all know layouts that are wired with whatever was available and if you ask them they will all tell you that they wished they hadn't.

I don't trust the track joiners to transfer power so I solder a drop wire from the track to the buss for each section of track. I do not like to strip the insolation back on the buss wire to solder on the drop wire. This just opens the wire to oxidation which can create problems over time. I like to use the Scotch Locks or suitcase connectors. These are simple to install by slipping over the buss, placing the drop wire into the other side and crimping the metal bar down with a pair of Channel Locks (The special vice-grip style plyers aren't worth the expense and really don't work as well as the Channel Locks). The suitcase connector allows the buss wire to pass all the way through it but the drop wire side has a block so it only goes in half way. This can be tricky in that the buss wire can slip out while you are crimping it. Clamp a hemostat across the buss and drop wires to hold them together and then crimp the connector. Another option that I just learned about came from Jerry Hoverson and I thought was a really great idea. He drills out the stop so that he can run a longer wire all the way through the connector. With the suitcase connector installed in the middle he then solders one end to one side of the track joint and the other end

"All along this journey you must be careful and really take your time to do the job right."

solders to the other side of the track joint. Not only does this mean you use half the number of connectors but it also eliminates the issue of the drop wire slipping out. It may take a bit of time to drill out the connector but this will be something I plan to try on my next project. One last note on soldering drop wires…if there is one thing that just sets off my OCD is to see a big wire soldered to the side of the rail. I know that this is the way its been done for years but it really looks bad (especially in pictures). Some of the cleanest drops I have ever seen were done with a resistant soldering unit where the wire was bent into an L and soldered to the bottom of the rail. Since not every modeler can afford such a unit I have a cheap and easy fix for you. Replace one tie in the section of rail with a PC Board tie with a gap in the center to isolate each side electrically. Solder the rail to the tie and then make an L shape from the drop wire. A drop can then be soldered to either side of the PC tie. Let the ballast drift a little higher over that tie to hide it and you will never see an electrical drop again.

From this point I start placing the 3-D mockup buildings that I have written about before to give me an idea where the scenery can go. I then place blue painters tape over the track to protect it during the scenery process. This keeps the plaster and paint off the rails (the track ballast should be done last so that it looks like it was placed top of the land). Your scenery could be flat or have hills or mountains depending on where your railroad is located. Typically, we tend to add hills and mountains where some do not normally exist so we can hide our track running under of over another piece of track. There are many different ways to create scenery from foam to traditional plaster hard shell. Yet another 'to each their own' situation. Either way you go, this is where your layout really comes to life. All the work we have done to this point really is just the foundation. Scenery, structures, people and cars all bring the layout to life and, for me, is really where the fun begins. Don't get me wrong, I'm one the sick folks who truly enjoys hand laying track but this step really gets my creative side going. Making scenes and placing all the little details so that each space tells a story is the fun part for me.

All along this journey you must be careful and really take your time to do the job right. I can't stress this enough. Jumping the gun and doing things before they should be done will only lead to problems. The end goal for this is a layout that runs like Swiss watch. If you take your time, and do the job right this is easily achieved. You can't lay track without roadbed underneath it. You can't go back and easily add it or even just adding a brace under some roadbed can be a challenge once things are covered up. I remember a story that John Allen ran wiring in conduit under the cement floor of what would become the Gorre and Daphetid that sat unused for 16 years but once he got to that side of the layout it was already there and ready to go. Careful planning and execution will give you the layout of your dreams. Getting the cart in front of the horse will usually give you a layout that has constant problems and will only be a frustration for years to come.

If you have something that you would like for me to cover, please feel free to contact me and I'll see what I can do about digging up some information. duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

Until next time, keep the boiler full, the fires hot and your wheels on the rails. ML

Keith Guterriez

By Richard Kamm

Keith Gutierrez

SUE LINE

With a new year, I will be taking a new direction and discussing some of the many people who have influenced me as I have traveled in the great wilderness known as model railroading.

One of most familiar expression in the English language is by Sir Isaac Newton in 1676: "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants". This is certainly true for me. I have been fortunate enough to know many of the true giants of model railroading and it only by "standing on their shoulders" that the Sue Line Railroad is what it is today.

My first person is my best friend, my mentor, my confidant and my strength when I am weak- Keith Gutierrez of Dallas, Texas. Keith Gutierrez has retired from a career at Texas Instruments. I first met Keith Gutierrez during an open house in Dallas, Texas. Keith Gutierrez had a N-scale railroad in a single bedroom of his home. I was impressed with the railroad layout, but more impressed with its owner and builder Keith Gutierrez.

The first electronic project that I rebuilt with Keith Gutierrez appeared on page 76 of the November 1976 *Model Railroader* "Build a Digital Fast Clock". The

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

clocks shown on page 78 were on the roof tower of a building on my Sue Line layout.

Shortly after we first met two electrical engineers Check Balmer and Dick Robbin from Ohio, in 1972 introduced a model train control system-Digitrack 1600. After reading about this system in Model Railroader, I contacted Russ Larson, the editor at that time. Russ Larson acknowledged that Model Railroader had bought the rights to the system, but was unsure what they would do with them. I subsequently called Russ Larson about once a week for several years about the project. Finally, in 1976, Russ Larson agreed to send me the information with the provision that I tell no one about the contents. What a delima I created, I now had the information which was like having an ancient Greek document and a fiend who read and was fluent in Greek, but I could not get the two together. I struggled along trying to learn about electronics (I was certainly Greek to me). Finally, in 1978, Russ Larson relented and showed the information to Keith Gutierrez. As is his style, Keith Gutierrez carefully reviewed the information, analyzed the information and formulated a plan.

The system of course worked, but by then the electronic devices were almost five years old. Keith Gutierrez then set about to improve the system. I heard nothing for several months and then Keith Gutierrez contacted me with great news, the system had been updated and was functional. Keith Gutierrez called the mew version of the system CTC-16. Several prototype boards were produced and Keith Gutierrez sent me along with Jason R. "Bob" Moore, then in Austin, Texas Mose H. Crews, then in Minden Louisiana, and Jay Thompson of Dallas, Texas, a set of components along with instruction on how to assemble the boards. As usual Keith Gutierrez was going to teach us how to build the system, not just give us a completed system. This was going to be something a modeler could build at home with minimal knowledge of electronics and have for themselves.

In his column At the Throttle, Linn Wescott, then Editor of *Model Railroader*, indicated that, "most of the promoting of command control has come from electrical engineers; and, many of the systems were developed by such men too soon after they had become interested in model railroading. They had not yet learned the practical aspects of the hobby and so did not consider them in their design work." (*Model Railroader*, page 31, December 1971.). This is a landmark article for command control and should be read by all who have any interest in command control.

Keith Gutierrez was an electrical engineer who had an extensive background in the hobby of model railroading and was extremely well versed in the practical aspects of the hobby and the needs of the modeler. In the December 1979 issue of *Model Railroader*, Keith Gutierrez presented the beginning of a series "Introducing the CTC-16: A 16 channel command control system you can build". (Model Railroader page 64, December 1979). The next issue of *Model Railroader*, in typical Keith Gutierrez fashion gave the modeler all they needed to finish the project-, complete schematic, pc board layout and a complete parts list. Also there were step by step instruction of assembly and testing of the project. The series concluded in the April 1980 *Model Railroader* with an epilogue on page 132 in the December 1980 *Model Railroader*.

In his column At The Throttle, then *Model Railroade*r editor Russ Larson said "I believe Keith Gutierrez's series has laid the groundwork for tomorrow's command control systems. In fact, I look forward to the day when command control with be available installed in ready-to-run locomotives at readily affordable prices." (Page 53, August 1981 Model Railroader)

On page 85 of the April 1984 *Model Railroader*, Keith Gutierrez presented a new series "The CTC-16e: The Next Generation of Command Control." This series concluded on page 86 of the August 1984 *Model Railroader*. This was later published as a booklet by *Model Railroader Magazine* through Kalmbach Publications.

Keith Gutierrez also authored the article "Build the Wireless Throttle:1" (page 86, March 1986 *Model Railroader*). This series was continued on page 68 in the April 1986 *Model Railroader*. As previously, Keith Gutierrez used the same format, explain the purpose, give full schematics, give full parts lists and instruction to build and test the project along the way.

In February 1997, Keith Gutierrez along with Lee Rayburn updated the system with "The EasyDCC Command Control System: 1" (*Model Railroader* page 86, February 1997) This was a six part series which ended in the July 1997 *Model Railroader*.

I find Keith Gutierrez is an amazing individual with exceptional insight. On several occasions I have face problems and Keith Gutierrez always gives the same advice- "It is something simple." I have no background in electronics, but Keith Gutierrez has guided me through several projects with a gentle hand and a sharp mind.

I recall one weekend we were visiting Dr. Bruce Chubb at his famous Sunset Valley Lines. It was about thirty minutes before to guests were scheduled to arrive and Dr. Bruce Chubb had a failure in his control system. There was Dr. Bruce Chubb in a undershirt with shaving cream on his face trying to find the problem. Keith Gutierrez took his usual approach and several minutes later Keith Gutierrez had found the problem, replaced the defective part and all was working again.

Keith Gutierrez and I have had numerous discussions about many facets of the wonderful hobby of model railroading and it is truly due to his input that I am were I am today in the hobby. ML

ATTENTION!

OUTHOUSE CONTEST

2017 HOUSTON BAYOU CITY CONVENTION

This year the special contest will be "Outhouse".
We did this several years ago and had several great models enter the Special Award. We decided to bring it back this year to see if we could increase the models in the Contest Room.

The rules are very simple - build an outhouse! It can be part of a Display/Diorama or a stand alone building entered in another area in the contest room.

Get your thoughts together and build an outhouse for your railroad, would make a good 1st scratchbuilding project if you are working toward your MMR. It was proven the last time that it is possible to merit building an outhouse.
See you and your entries in Houston.

START WORKING NOW on an entry!

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Then send to:
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Rockwall, TX 75087

Ads can then be sent as a JPG file attached to an email to:
rileytriggs@gmail.com

ATTENTION!

NON RAILS

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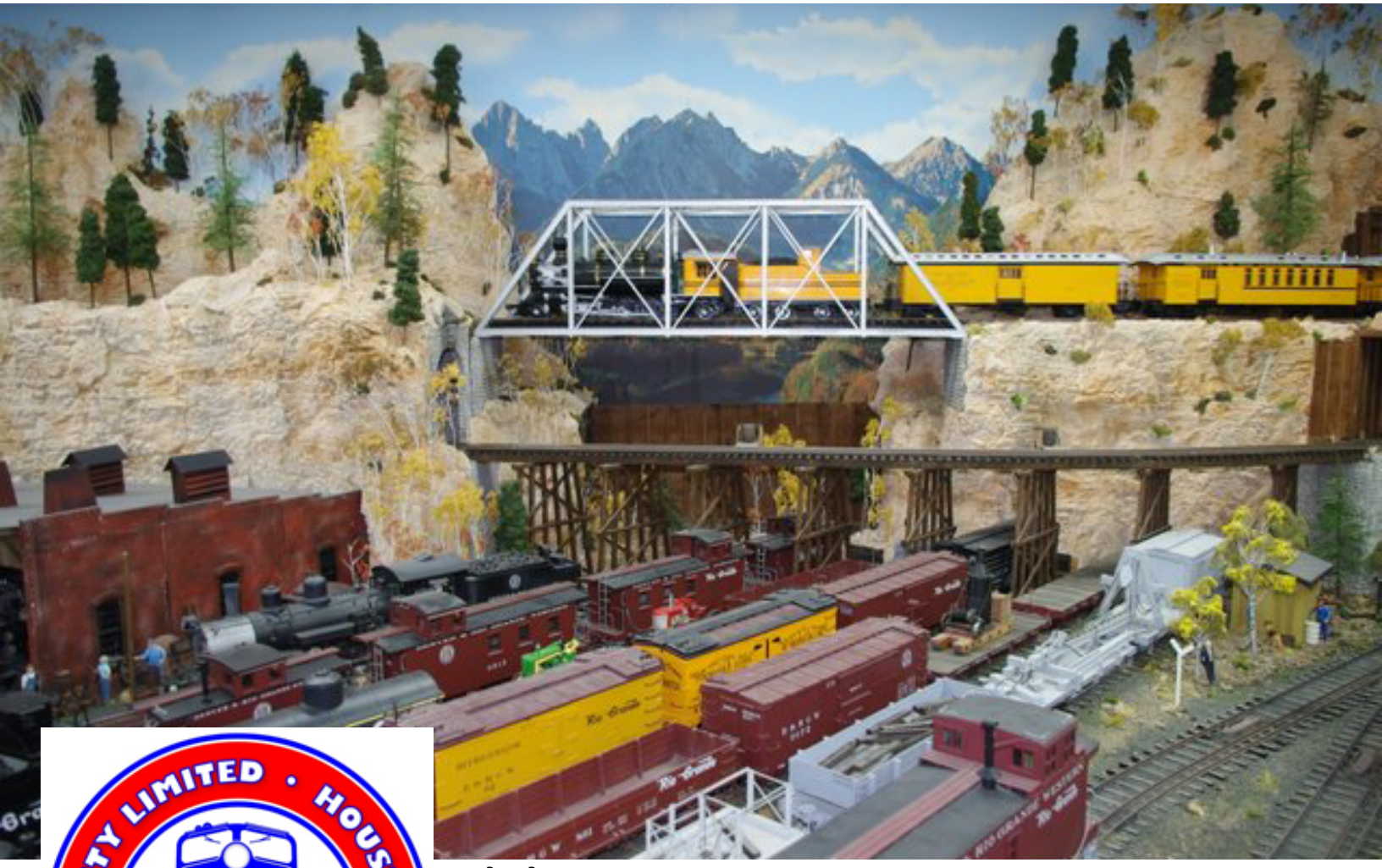
BAYOU CITY LIMITED

By Robert Ashcraft
Convention Chairman



Barry Bogs

I'm glad to announce that the Website for the Bayou City Limited is now ready to start accepting your reservations for the LSR Convention. We will continue to update the site as we gather more information and add new items. You can visit the site at www.bayoucitylimited.org .

To date we are excited to announce that our speaker for Saturday night's banquet will be Mr. Joe McMillan, a career railroader and photographer. You can read more about him in the Time Table section under Dinner Speaker.

We have two Prototype tours scheduled at this time. The first is a tour of the GBW Railcar Services Facilities, Greensport Facility. This is located at the old Armco Steel plant along the Port of Houston. The other tour will be a visit to the Houston Metrorail Shops and Facilities and should prove to be an interesting tour. We will have

more information on both tours in the near future. We will also be offering a Saturday guided bus tour of some of our more outstanding layouts in the area. So you can sit back and leave the driving to us.

As a departure from previous conventions, we will not be having the usual breakfast/business meeting on Sunday morning. Instead, we are hosting a catered BBQ diner at the Rosenberg Railroad Museum which is included with your registration. The museum is located along the tracks for the UP, KCS & BNSF Railroads, so we should have some great train watching. Also at the museum is the restored 1879 Business Car "Quebec", the restored interlocking Tower 17, a 1972 MoPac caboose, a Garden Railroad and more.

Our layout tours will feature some of the finest model railroads you can find. We should have at least seven Master Model Railroaders on tour plus a number of other railroads that are works of fine craftsmanship. We will have a complete list of railroads to choose from soon. Operations on some of these railroads will be offered. Keep checking back on the website for more information.

For those who may want to see something other than trains, we have planned some events that go in a different direction.

Wednesday evening after you check in to the hotel and get settled, please join us in the Non-Rail Clinic room for snacks and visiting. As we visit, we will work on making No Sew Fleece Blankets for Project Linus. This room will

Gordon Bliss

Brookwood Community in Brookshire, TX

Lanier Theological Library

Eddie Carroll

also be our clinic room for clinics Friday evening and Saturday and is our hospitality room where we will continue to meet, visit, and make blankets. We hope you can join us on the tours described below.

Thursday, June 8th – a visit to Brookwood Community in Brookshire, TX

The Brookwood Community is a non-profit residential facility and vocational program for adults with disabilities. The Brookwood campus includes eight group homes, two single-family staff homes, a residential Inn, health and dental clinic, Worship Center, enterprise building, activities and administration building, 47 greenhouses, a Gift and Garden Center and the Café at Brookwood along with several outbuildings. Our visit will include a guided tour followed by lunch in the Café and shopping in the Gift and Garden Center.

Friday, June 9th – a visit to the Lanier Theological Library and shopping at Thompson's Antique Center of Texas

Gil Freitag

Thompson's Antique Center of Texas

The Lanier Theological Library is a growing resource for all students and scholars of the Bible in Northwest Houston. Within the library is a comprehensive collection of books, periodicals, historical documents and artifacts with topics ranging from Church history and Biblical Studies to Egyptology and Linguistics. In addition, LTL offers many other objects and resources to explore from the true-to-size replica of a 6th century Byzantine chapel to an original King James Bible from 1611, a visit to the library will interest almost any person, no matter their background, religion or age.

Following a stop for lunch, we will continue to Thompson's Antique Center of Texas that has 17 aisles of antiques and collectibles with over 200 vendors in its 108,000 square foot shopping center. Open since 1991, they have a wide variety of items including coin collections, furniture, jewelry, clothing and hats, artwork, books, dishes, fishing tackle and more.

To see more about these places:

- brookwoodcommunity.org
- laniertheologicallibrary.org
- antiquecenteroftexas.com

Along with these activities we will have a plethora of clinics to choose from and a great modeling contest for you to show off your work over the past year. So come early and stay late as Houston has lot to offer you and your family as a place to have fun in the sun.

We are looking forward to seeing you all! ML

Chuck Lind

Steve Sandifer

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Lanier Theological Library and Shopping at Thompson's Antique Center of Texas –Limited to 25

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Replacing Gears

In an HO Lifelike Proto 2000

By Blake Bogs
superchief15@yahoo.com

If you have a HO Lifelike Proto 2000, GP7 or GP9, you might be looking at the title of this article a little differently than most people. When I first entered into HO Scale almost 10 years ago, I did not know about this common problem. My friend, Gary Abramski, first told me about this problem when I bought one of my first GP locomotives at a train show. I brought my locomotive home, placed it on the track, and ran it. However, when I did, it started thumping. I was concerned that I had bought a lemon locomotive and proceeded to call Gary and talk to him about this concerning problem. He told me that the gears on the locomotive broke and that the gears would have to be replaced. Over the last 10 years I have changed gears on over 50 locomotives and I now have it down to an art. I will walk you through the process in this short article.

Time Taken: 15 minutes to 1 Hour

Difficulty: Can be extremely challenging!!!!

Notice: This process is very tedious. Also, the gear box covers will break so be extremely careful.

Needed:

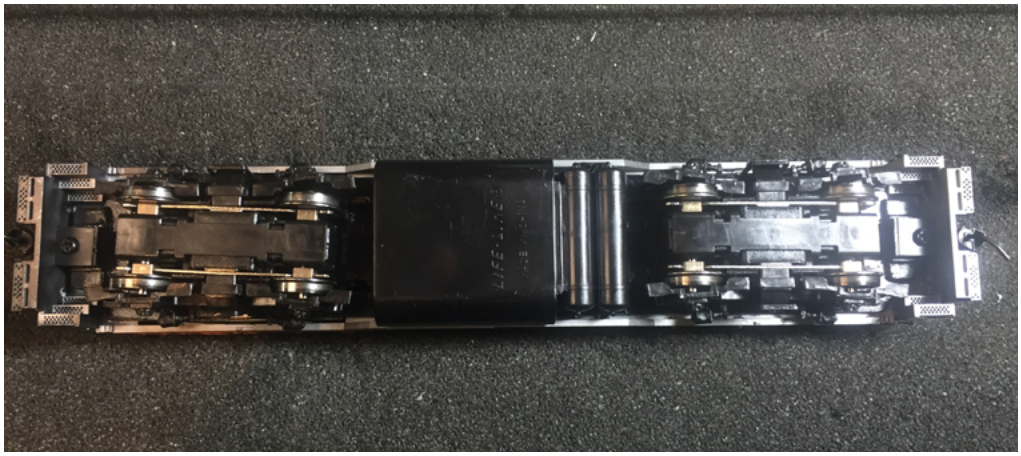
- 2-3 Small flathead screwdrivers (including a jewelers flathead screwdriver)
- Athearn SD40 Gears Part # 60024
- NMRA Gauge
- Automatic Transmission Fluid, Labelle Lube, or whatever lube you like (your preference)
- Magnification
- Locomotive Cradle
- Needle Nose Pliers
- Hard surface

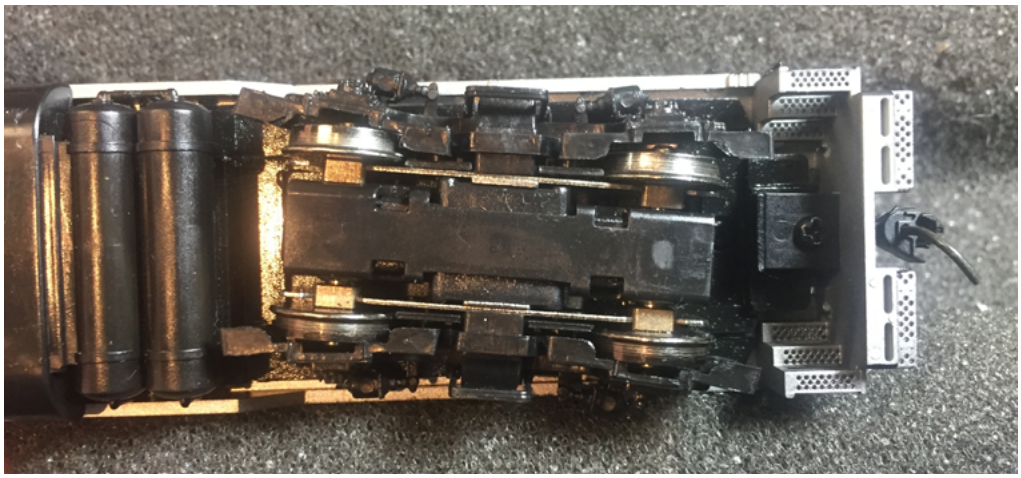
Question: Do you have a broken gear?

If you can hear thumping when running the locomotive you most likely have a

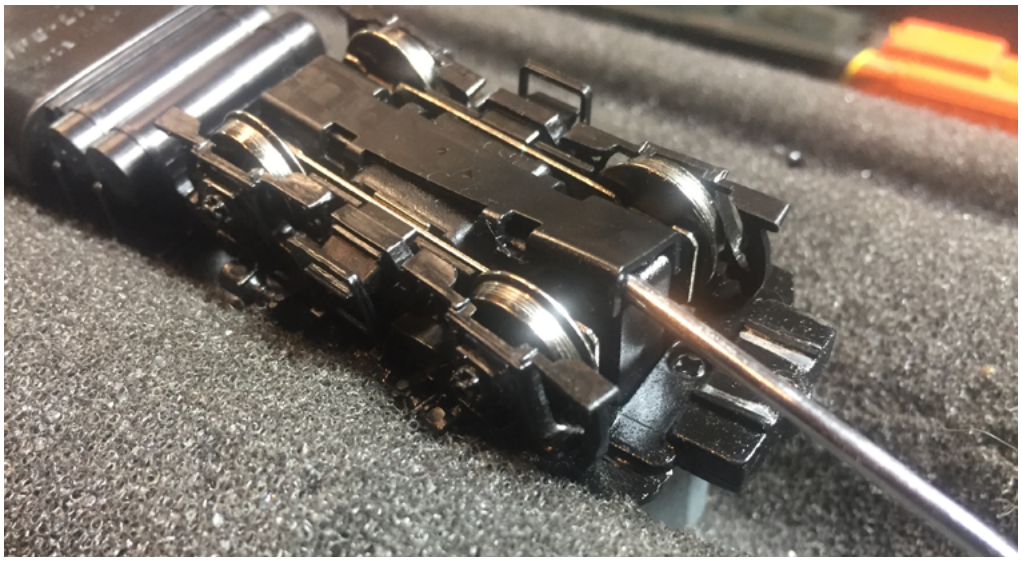
broken gear. To double check, turn your locomotive upside down in the cradle and test each wheel set individually. Attempt to move each wheel on the wheel set in opposite directions. If your wheel sets move freely, you have broken gears. If not, you do not have a broken gear in this wheel set.

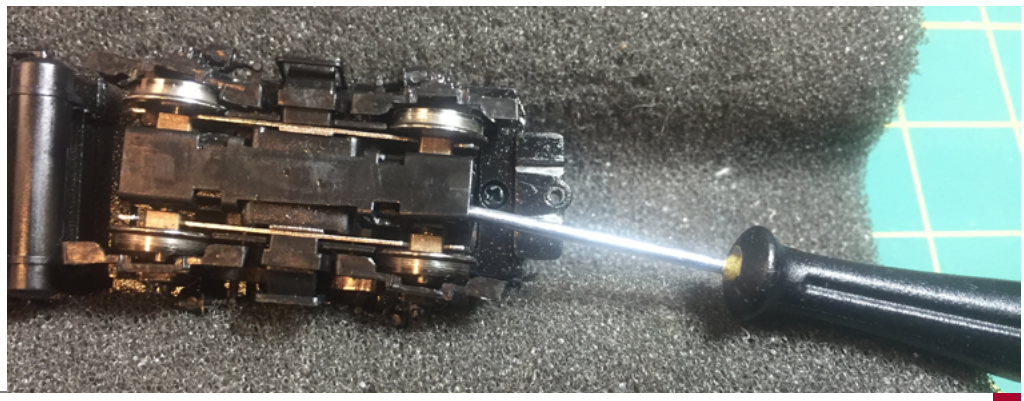
Step 1: Set Locomotive upside down in the cradle. Please note that the cradle will break off the window shades on the cab. They move very easily and have a tendency of breaking off. They can be re-glued.



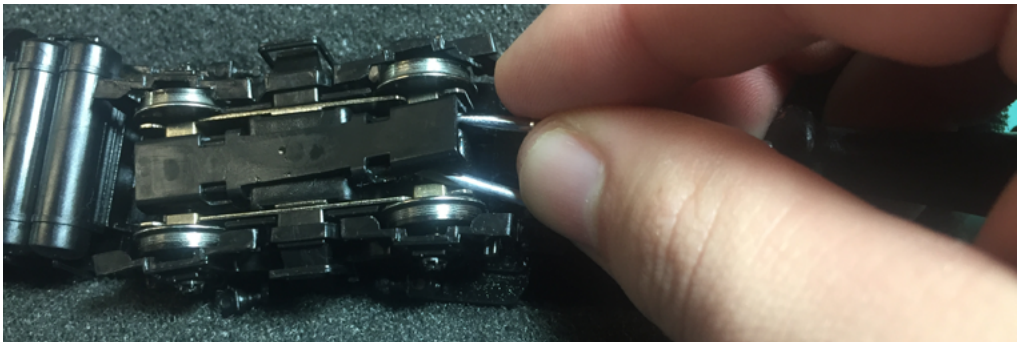


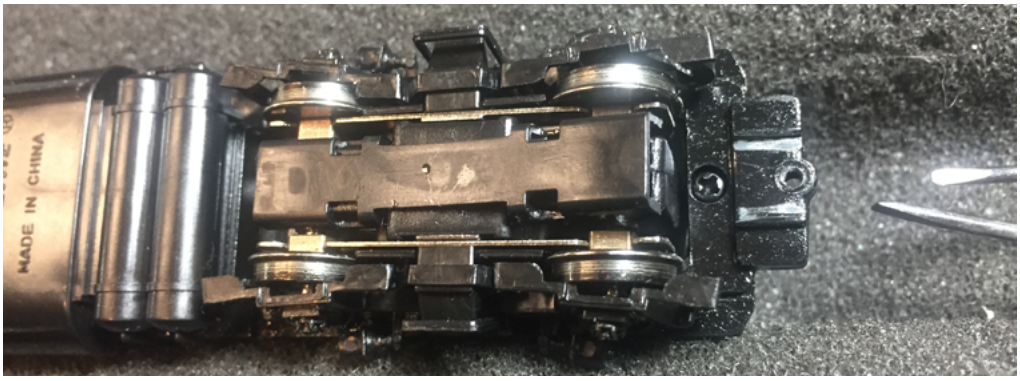
Step 2: Find the gearbox cover and the four tabs holding the gearbox cover on the truck. With your small screwdriver, slide your screwdriver behind one of the four tabs on the gearbox cover on the side of the gearbox cover.

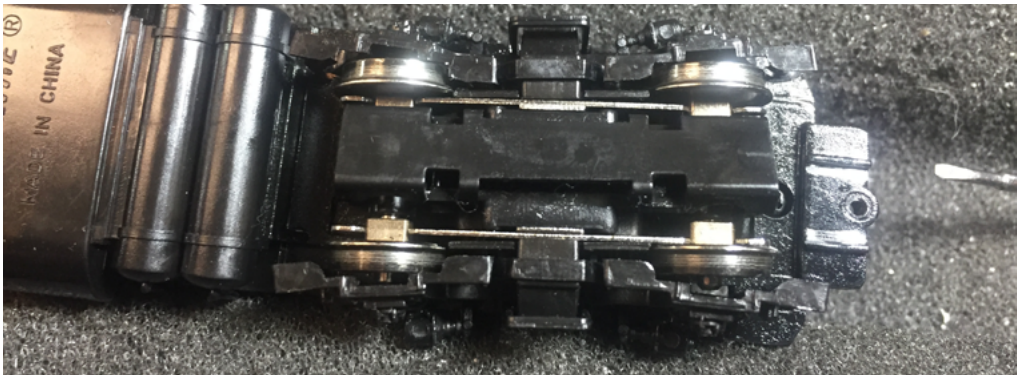


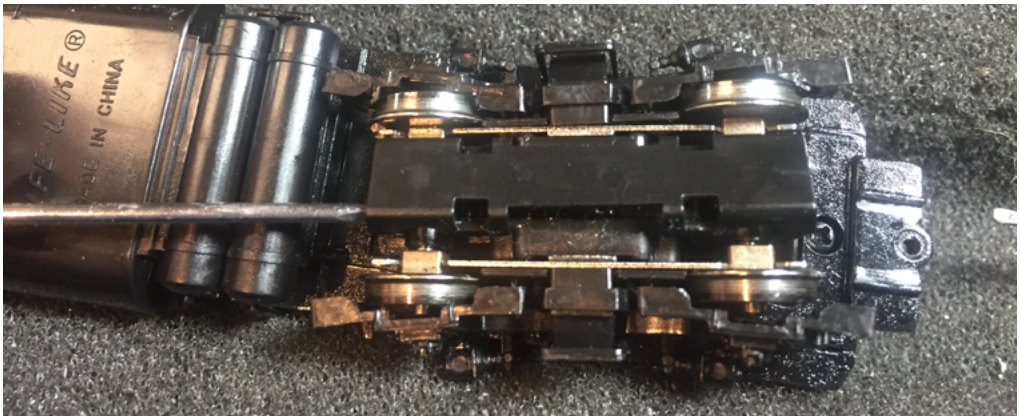


Step 3: Slide your second screwdriver behind the other tab on the same side of the gearbox cover. The gearbox cover will now pop off on one side.

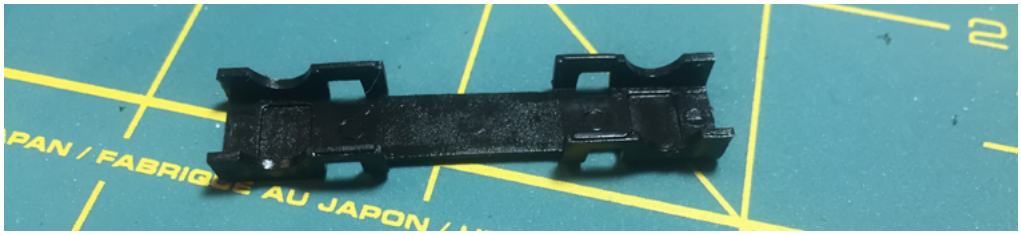






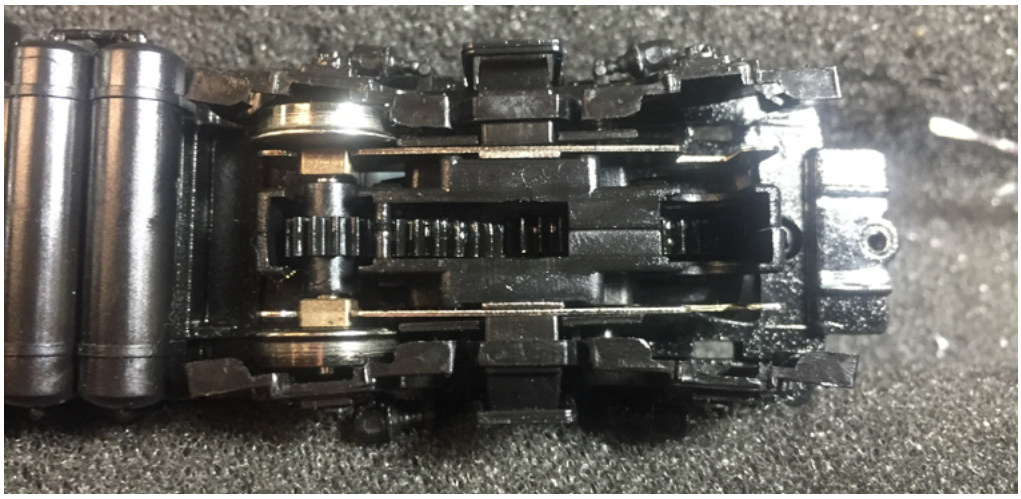


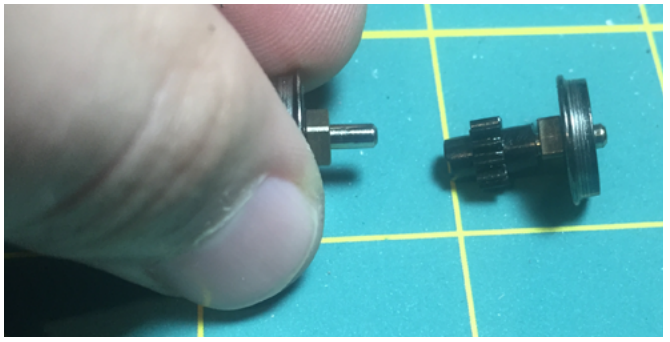
Step 4: Once your gearbox is popped off on one side of the gearbox, move your screwdriver underneath the cover to the other side to pop the tabs on the other side to remove the cover.



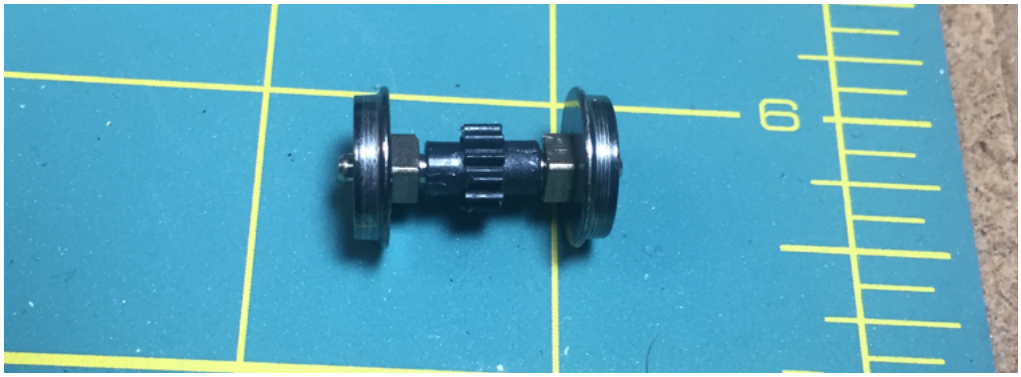
Step 5: Pull the affected wheel sets out of the gearbox. Pull the wheels off of the gear and set the affected gear to the side. Pull out the new gear from the package. When you press the new gear on the axle you need to allow some space in between the back of the wheel set and the bearing. When pressing the gear together, I put the jeweler's screw-driver in between the wheel and the bearing as shown below. This gives me just enough room. I need to allow the bearing to move freely, but not allow enough space that the wheel set is not in gauge. I use the needle nose pliers to hold the gear and then press the gear down to the wheel set.

I recommend using a piece of wood to press the wheel set down on. When pressing, do not press on a soft surface. You will damage the surface.

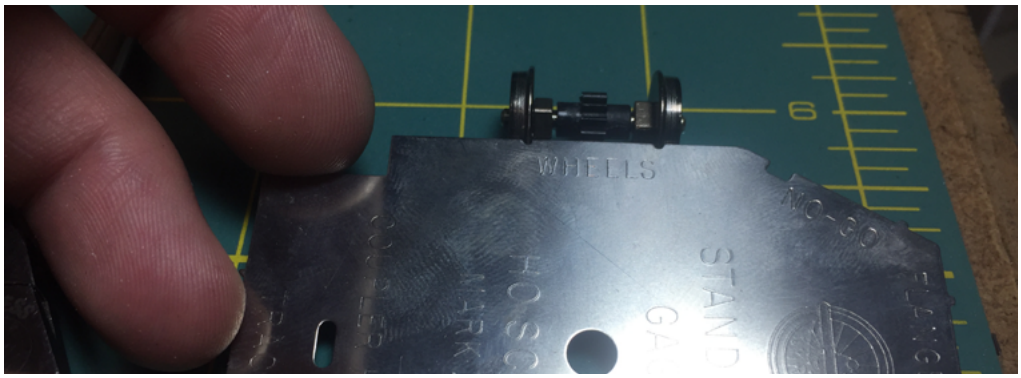




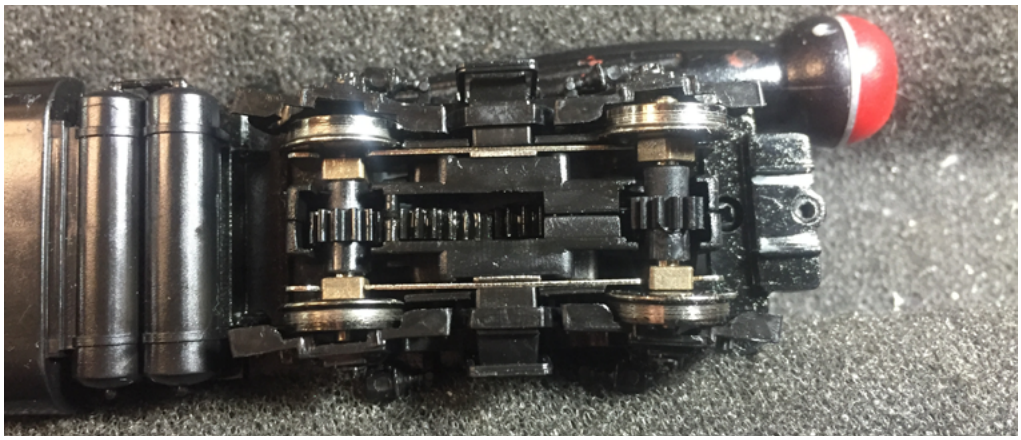
Step 6: Attach the other wheel to the gear. Use the same exact process as above, except use the pliers on the side of the gear with the wheel attached. The gear must be even between the two wheel sets as shown below. If it is too close to the wheel on either side, it will not work. If the gear is too far from the wheel on either side, it will be out of gauge and will not work.



Step 7: Use the NMRA Gauge to check if your wheels are in gauge. If not, go and correct your wheel set using your pliers and the screwdrivers. This is the most difficult process.



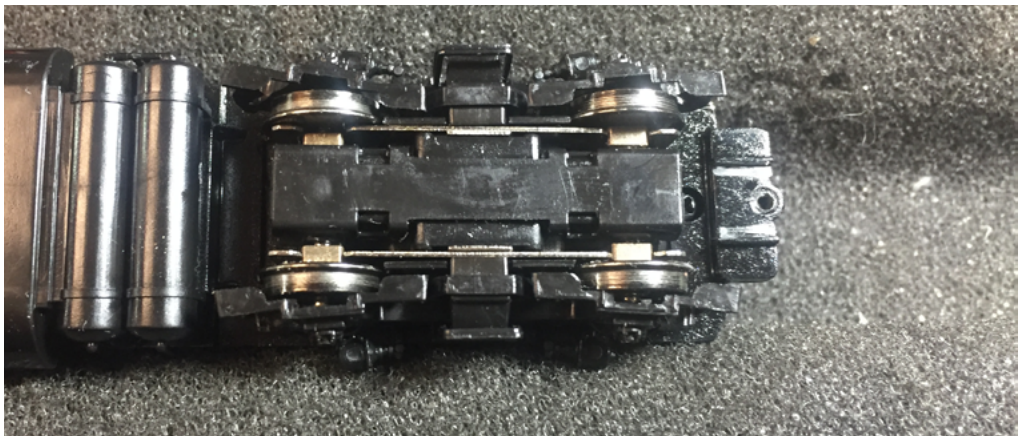
Step 8: When you are ready to reassemble everything, set the newly assembled gear set in the locomotive and double check it will work in your locomotive. If everything fits, take the wheel set out of the locomotive and lube with your preference of lubrication.



Step 9: If you have other wheel sets, assemble the wheel sets with the gear. Once all gears and wheel sets are in place, then you can close the cover on your gear box.

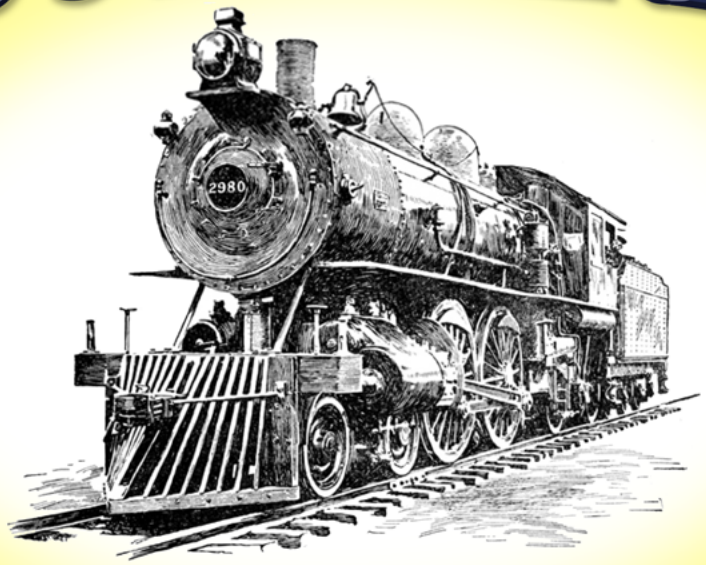
Step 10: Test the locomotive for binds, thumping, and running quality. If the engine passes, then congratulations! You have new gears in your locomotive!

If you are worried about messing up something when replacing gears, you can get already assembled wheel sets from Walthers. The part number is: #920-584408. At the time I wrote this article, the wheel sets were out of stock, but they are expected back in soon. If you need help, please let me know. My email is listed above. ML



2017

AUSTIN AREA



TRAIN SHOW

Saturday May 6 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Sunday May 7 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Williamson County Expo Center
210 Carlos G. Parker Blvd - Taylor, Texas
Just minutes past the Dell Diamond!

Enjoy over 16,000 square feet of model railroading including:
Operating Railroads • Dozens of Vendors • Buy and Sell • All Scales
Raffle • Clinics • Self-Guided Area Layout Tour
Plenty of Free Parking • Refreshments Available

Admission $7
Children 12 and under FREE with adult!

For more information or for vendor tables contact trainshow@centexnmra.org or visit https://centexnmra.org/trainshow

MINUTES OF THE LONE STAR REGION BOARD MEETING

Houston, Texas – January 21, 2017

President Steve Barkley called the Annual Board meeting to order at 9:11 AM.

Roll call

All of the officers, directors and committee chairpersons were present except:
Voting Board Members:

Position	Elected Rep	Proxy
Division 1 – Chris Atkins	– Blake Bogs	
Division 3 – Jerry Hoverson	– Donna Orr	
Division 4 – Peter Kazmir	– Riley Triggs	
Division 5 – Dave Lamberts		
Division 6 – Kevin Bergeman		
Dir. At Large – Marc LaChey	– Jeff Palmer	

Non-voting Board Members:
Membership – Larry Swigert
Historian – Jim Long

Open Chairs:
Convention –
Youth –

Guests in attendance:
Ray Byer – Division 8 President

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Secretary Jeff Palmer provided a motion and Rod Fredericks seconded to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as published the Minutes of the June 26, 2016 Annual Board of Directors meeting published in the 2016 Fall issue of The Marker Lamp - designated as 2017-01-21 LSR Motion 1 passed.

Officers Reports

President Steve Barkley

The last year has been a good year for the Lone Star Region. These are some highlights:
The Lone Star Region 2016 Annual Convention was held in Arlington, Texas. About 200 modelers attended including many family and youth members. The convention returned a small profit to the two host LSR divisions.

The convention featured a model contest, a silent auction, clinics for both modelers and spouses, and lots of time to socialize with fellow modelers. All had a good time.

The 2017 convention will be in Houston. The website for the 2017 convention should soon be active.

The Cost of Membership

One of our Division Directors who is also a college student raised his concern about the cost of NMRA membership. This is a very real issue that should be carefully considered by the NMRA Board.

Student membership is now $38.00 per year including the magazine. This can be a significant cost to a student if his or her parents are not helping meet the cost.

Then consider the cost of regular adult memberships. It now costs $72.00 per year for an adult including the magazine. Without the magazine it costs $44.00.

I understand that the average age of our adult membership is near 65. Many are retired and on fixed incomes. My experience is that older members are much more sensitive to the cost of their memberships whether that is justified by their personal situation.

At the same time, the cost of model railroad products and other train magazines continues to rise. Model Railroader is now $42.95 per year.

We should remember the law of Supply and Demand. Simply put, as the cost of an item rises the demand for it drops. A corollary states that there is a similar relationship between the costs of other products and demand for a similar item.

As the cost of other model magazines rises we should expect to see a decline in NMRA and LSR membership. For that matter, model railroading is not a necessity of life. As our membership perceives that they must curtail spending, then model railroading related expenditures may be the first to go.

So what may be some solutions?

1. Work with the NMRA Headquarters and White River Productions to expand the demand for the NMRA Magazine. Can it be combined with some of the SIG's publications?
2. Cut costs. Is the NMRA top heavy? What is the actual cost of administration and can it be reduced? The LSR has no paid employees and very few organization costs.
3. Why is full NMRA membership $72.00 per year? I suggest that we ask that the NMRA budget be published each year so that the membership can see where the money goes.

I've been a member for well over 25 years and a model railroader for much longer than that. I have enjoyed my NMRA membership. I am sensitive to comments that I hear from LSR members about costs.

Vice-President Bob Barnett

Planning for the 2017 Lone Star Region is well underway in my neck of the woods. In addition, as my recent appointment as Education Chair for the Lone Star Region I am preparing a record of clinics and presentations presented at Lone Star Region, LSR Divisions, and ALL–NMRA Clubs for the year 216.

This report will be continuously updated at appropriate time during the year. The purpose is to document the educational activities and outreach of the LSR and its subdivisions and to maintain an information bank of potentially available clinics that could be used for future LSR Conventions, Division Meetings, All-NMRA Club Meetings and Area Train shows.

The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, an all-NMRA club, continues to hold monthly meetings complete with an hour long clinic each month of the year (except for the December Christmas Party). These clinics are arranged by Vice President David Currey. Ray Byer, Jim Lemmond, and Tom Marsh are continuing the Division 8 practice of hosting Saturday morning Clinic once a month.

So in the coming months of 2017, NMRA members, area modelers and interested rail-fans will have the opportunity of attending a clinic/presentation the first Tuesday evening of each month and the second Saturday morning of each month. By these educational outreach activities we plan to maintain the NMRA membership and grow interest in the NMRA.

Treasurer Donna Orr

Since our Annual membership meeting at the convention in the DFW area:

While I have been looking into moving our money into CD's, the Vanguard company sent a letter to the LSR NMRA, that we can no longer have our money in the current funds. Some new government regulation. They have sent checks to us and closed out those accounts. I have been checking out various banks so see which one(s) would give us the best return. I am depositing the money at four month intervals. The first will be this month, January, just after the mid-year meeting, so that we are in a position to withdraw it, should we need to after any mid-year meeting. The second will be in May and the third will be in September. I will coordinate with the new treasurer on this plan, until a better solution comes along.

Another situation that has not been resolved is the Beaumont convention misc receipts. I have the checks and receipts for most of the convention. We must keep in mind that if we are audited by the IRS, good record keeping is the key. So a motion is needed to close out the books on this convention knowing that we do not have all the receipts needed.

In light of this situation, if we were audited, the IRS could now allow the expenses and have us pay taxes and fines all the way to taking our 501c3 away. And if they find too many inconsistencies, they have the power to audit the Board of Directors. This includes voting and non-voting members. It is in our best interest to keep our receipts and keep them in one central location. If audited, the IRS would be looking for our procedures to prevent any deviations from our responsibilities.

The DFW convention turned in their paperwork in a 3 ring binder, (a month before it was due) that I will have available for anyone to look through. This binder is a great example of what record keeping we need in case of an audit. The DFW convention paid back their $2,000 loan, paid the LSR $324 for members attending and paid the LSR a profit of $192.00. the two divisions that put on the convention each received $1,637.97.

I have provided the most current spreadsheet with our proceeds and disbursements for fiscal year 2016-2017. And also the updated projected budget for 2016-2017.

We currently have $38,826.92 in our treasury.

Secretary Jeff Palmer

Since the conclusion of the 2016 LSR Convention, The LSR Secretary has been working with the LSR Treasurer, and Nomination Chair to resolve various issues. It came to my attention that the Nomination Chair was under the mistaken idea that the nomination committee had some kind of qualification/approval rights as to who could run for office. No such provision is provided for in the Constitution or By-Laws and until such provisions are added, the committee needed to recruit, and provide assistance to those stepping up to run for office, not discourage office seekers. My efforts to resolve this issue ran into a number of hurdles since Steve Blackson would not accept or return calls, nor return emails but perseverance prevailed. When Steve tendered his resignation, the offer was readily accepted. The good news about this unfortunate event was that Blake Bogs volunteered to accept the position of Nomination Chair, however brief it may be, it is an honor to work with him again to right the nomination process. Since that time, the Election Bios have been authored and posted on the LSR website. Thank you Blake.

Also since the close of the convention, the 2015 Convention Committee has continued to fail to render the receipts they were supposed to keep, and have failed to render any kind of records to account for the money spent but unreported. A motion should be made to close the 2015 books as they are.

On the other hand, the 2016 convention was a success and a full accounting of expenditures has been made. I leave the details to our Treasurer and the 2016 Convention Committee.

Looking forward to the 2017 convention report. Only reported concern is the lack of communications from the committee. Now that the 2017 convention website is up, hopefully everyone will get a little more comfortable - http://bayoucitylimited.org/.

We still do not have a 2018 convention committee.

The board still does not have a Youth Chair or a Convention Chair. It would be good if the various Directors would look around their division, and see if there is a qualified candidate in their division.

As covered in the Webchair Report, the LSR Website has had a number of issues, most of which are resolved at this time.

One last note, please remember in your reporting that education is our prime directive and to hi-lite it where possible in your reporting.

Advisor Bill McPherson
No Report

Directors Reports

Division 1 Director Chris Atkins reported that:

Mike Mackey is preparing to take over as Division 1 director and is having meetings with his club, electing officers and making plans. Mike is also exploring the division becoming its own 501(c)(3). I suspended division wide meetings due to poor attendance.

We lost yet another of our long-time members, Jim Norwood. He is greatly missed.

I have continued to support the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs 2 annual train shows in Plano by providing 40-50 hours of work per season in addition to acting as the Council's President. The Division's continued involvement with the Council under Mike is not clear at this time. This year Division 1 members Don Murphey and Bill Huebner supported the show thru clinics and Kenneth Keiser by manning the information table. I also have presented clinics at the shows..

Division 2 Director Rod Fredericks reported:

During this period the Bayou Division really lived up to its name, and not in a good way. What the meteorologists termed a mesoscale convective system formed over southeastern Louisiana in mid-August, dropping some 7 trillion gallons of rain in the areas surrounding Baton Rouge and Lafayette. This was the equivalent of four times the rainfall associated with Hurricane Katrina, overtaxing local rivers and bayous and resulting in what was termed a thousand-year flood. Homes and businesses in large areas of Baton Rouge and the parishes north, south and east of the city were flooded, some with water to the roof tops and a number of lives were lost. And the model railroading community did not escape the impact.

A number of model railroaders experienced home flooding and three layouts were damaged to various extents. My club, the Mid-South Model Railroad Club had 27 inches of water inside the building, not enough to reach the bottom of the layout, but high enough to submerge the DCC and signaling systems, and storage cabinets under the layout containing supplies, tools and engines and rolling stock (club property as well as members' personal property). Needless to say, the financial impact is significant.

But we have already started the long way back. All of the water damaged material (sheetrock, carpet, cabinets, etc.) have been torn out and removed from the site. The building dried and disinfected and currently new insulation and wall material is being installed. We still have a long road ahead of us, but a willing crew of club members and other model railroaders are working toward the resurrection of the MSMRRC. We might even have trains running again by the first of the year.

At this point I will add that the rebuilding of the club might not be possible were it not for the NMRA layout insurance. We have yet to reach a final settlement, but a tentative figure in excess on $10,000 is expected. Thankfully, the flooding, although extensive here, did not extend too far north, or into the New Orleans area. The Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroad Club in Jackson, LA was not damaged, nor was the Crescent City Model Railroad Club in Metairie, LA.

On a personal note, the area of town that I live in did not flood. My home and layout are fine, but just a short drive around town and my heart breaks to see all of the devastation this event has wroth on the lives and property of my neighbors. Model railroading is important to us, but that importance tends to dim when you see what others are going through. But south Louisiana people are a strong lot, and we will overcome.

October, 15th to January, 15th: Recovery in the Baton Rouge area of the Bayou Division from the disastrous flooding in August has come a long way. My club, the Mid-South Model Railroad Club had 27 inches of water inside the building, not enough to reach the bottom of the layout, but high enough to submerge everything underneath,

including the DCC and signaling systems, storage cabinets containing supplies, tools and off layout engines and rolling stock as well as sheetrock and floor carpet. Since then, club members and a number of non-member model railroaders have pitched in ripping out the flood damaged material, cleaning up the mess and rebuilding the damage. There is still a lot to be done. The signaling system still needs to be replaced, but as of last week, the first trains since July are running on the Mid-South.

Jim Loftland's Tall Timber home layout was also flooded as well as his house. Like the Mid-South, the water was not high enough to reach the layout, But everything below was ruined and had to be torn out. Much of the refurbishment has been done and he reports that trains are also running on it.

The Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroad Club north of the city in Jackson, LA did not suffer any flooding, but many of its members' homes were flooded. And thankfully, the flooding did not extent to the New Orleans area. The Crescent City Model Railroad Club in Metairie, LA. is alive and well as ever. Over the holiday season they have hosted numerous open houses, with large turnouts. In late October they also hosted a series of clinics and an operating session.

On a personal note, my area of Baton Rouge was not affected by the flood. However, a knee replacement has kept me from doing my work on my own layout. But the recovery is going fine and I have a few weeks to do some work here and at the club before getting the other knee replaced in March.

Division 3 Director Jerry Hoverson reported that:

Hope everyone had a great Christmas Holiday and remained safe and sane for the New Years.

Well, here in the North, we're still having monthly get togethers, having fun and learning from each other. For our educational clinics this past quarter;

October: we wrapped up the Bus clinic and I gave a trip report complete with lots of photos from my trip to Hamburg Germany and Miniatur Wunderland.

November: we had a guest speaker, Bill Huebner, who gave us a very comprehensive and enlightening clinic on the use of an Air Brush and acrylic paints

In December, we held our annual Christmas Party with lots of food, drink, comradery, and just plain old fun. The White Elephant gift exchange was a ball, a lot more "stealing" of gifts this year had everyone laughing a lot.

We've postponed our January meeting 1 week for the January Plano Train show so any new members can attend.

Lot's more to come so "Keep rolling down the tracks" and we'll see you next time!

Division 4 Director Peter Kazmir reported:

It has been an exciting and busy several months since our report for the 2016 annual meeting.

We had three Division meetups in July, September, and November. Our meetups typically consist of a clinic or two, show and tell, social time, "Deal or Duds" (a door prize giveaway), and a layout tour. We also have some educational material and displays in a beginner's corner as well as information describing the benefits of NMRA membership and the AP program. Through these meetups, we have added several members to our Division this year.

At the July meetup, Parker Lamb gave a fantastic presentation on the history of railroading in Central Texas. Afterwards, we honored Jerry Wilson for earning MMR #577 (and he gave a short presentation on what he learned about the process and along the way), and we toured Gerald Burgess' garden railroad and David Shannon's HO scale layout. At the September meetup, David and Sam Nicastro gave a clinic on over 70 different methods for modeling rust. Afterwards, we toured Steve Jackobs' HO scale layout, and Mark Richert's O scale indoor and outdoor layouts. Finally, at the November meetup, Chuck Lind led a discussion about estate planning for model railroaders and we toured Michael Generali's HO scale layout. Jack Merkel is also doing a series of micro-clinics about the benefits of the NMRA at different meetups.

Pictures and detailed recaps from each meetup, as well as pictures and information about these and other layouts across our Division, are posted on our website, centexnmra.org. The site also hosts a discussion board open to the public.

We advertise our meetups primarily via flyers at our local hobby shops and trains shows. Our meetings are usually attended by about 45 people, including NMRA members and guests (our meetings are free and open to the public).

The annual Temple Train Show was hosted by the Centra-Mod club in September and it was a great success like every year. The Division hosted a booth at the show and attracted several new members to the NMRA.

In addition, we hosted our yearly NMRA Meet in November. This event is something between a regular meet-up and a regional convention. It is a one-day event that includes six clinics, stations to help members with model mechanical and electrical issues, two operating layouts (one made of Legos!), a modeling contest, a raffle and door prizes. In addition, local layouts host operating sessions and open houses throughout the weekend. The event this year was successful with over 70 attendees including a few folks who took advantage of NMRA railpass membership. More information about the Meet is on our web site.

We are also happy to announce that members from our Division led by George Zapalac have started a new HO-scale club in the Austin area. The club is still in the planning phase (it doesn't even have a name yet), but has attracted over 40 members. At first the club will focus on modular layouts that can be assembled for operations or for show display, but the long-term plan is to find a permanent location and build a permanent layout. (Austin is already home to several clubs including N scale, Garden, On3 and O scale groups. It has been missing an HO club for a number of years so this is a welcome addition to the local scene!)

Finally, the most exciting news is that the Austin Model Railroad Jamboree is finally coming back after a multi-year hiatus. The newly renamed Austin Area Train Show will be held May 6 and 7 at the Williamson County Expo Center, which is only a few minutes past the Dell Diamond in Taylor, Texas. This event will be advertised and open to the public and will be much larger (more than 15,000 square feet) than the older Jamborees, including dozens of vendor tables and operating layouts on the show floor. We will also have clinics and a layout tour in conjunction with the show. (And we'll also have a Division meetup the following week which we'll be advertising at the show!) Look for advertisements in the Marker Lamp, Cow Catcher, and at hobby shops and other shows across the region.

This event is a fantastic opportunity to share knowledge, educate those interested in both life-sized and Model Railroading, to gain new NMRA members, and to have fun. We hope you can join us for the rebirth of this special Austin tradition that is over 40 years old!

Division 5 Director Dave Lamberts reported:

Not a lot to report from Division Five. We just raised our dues from $12.00 a year to $24.00 a year. So far no one has passed out.

Next month we will be holding our annual auction. I will describe the details of same in my next report.

If anyone would like to see a sample of the brochure let know and I will mail you one.

Division 6 Kevin Bergeman reported:

No Report

Division 7 Director Don Kimmell reported:

Membership has held fairly steady.

I conducted 2 Boy Scout educational visits, West Monroe and Delhi, Louisiana. I combined the hobby introduction with an Operation Lifesaver facilitation.

I have been promised a "booth" at the upcoming Jefferson, Texas train show.

A couple of our members handed out NMRA info sheets while volunteering on KCS' Holiday Express in Zwolle, Leesville, DeQuincy and Shreveport, Louisiana and also Port Arthur and Texarkana, Texas. Approximately 15,000 sheets distributed.

Division 8 Director Jim Lemmond reported:

Monthly clinics

The Division 8 executive committee has scheduled a meeting in January 2017 to create a calendar of events and clinics for the year. It has been suggested that the clinics sponsored by the Division will be a continuing series aimed at preparing attendees for entering NMRA type contests. Scratch building and "kitbashing," are planned for major clinics. The clinicians are yet to be determined.

Fifty-year tribute to Gil Freitag, MMR

The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club surprised Gil and Virginia Freitag with a commemorative book published by the club honoring them and the fiftieth anniversary of the Stoney Creek & Western Model Railroad. The book included many photos of Gil and the layout. Charley Getz, NMRA President, included a special letter to Gil honoring his many years of NMRA activity. The book has a listing of all the publications about the Stoney Creek & Western. Included were articles by San Jacinto Model Railroad Club members relating to Gil's many accomplishments. The book was assembled and published by the staff of the "Derail", San Jacinto Model Railroad Club's official club publication. In charge of publication were Bob Sabol and Terri Brogoitti.

Greater Houston Model Train Show

The Greater Houston Train Show, sponsored by the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, is scheduled for February 18, 2017. The location for the train show is the Stafford Centre in Stafford, Texas off US Highway 59 on the Southwest side of Houston. Details are available at:
http://sanjacmodeltrains.org/GHTS/GHTS.html
The show starts at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 18, 2017. The show includes clinics, vendors and items of interest for all ages.

Lone Star Region 2017 Youth Award

Division 8 has sponsored Nathan Lind for the 2017 LSR Youth Award.

Nathan's father writes, "Nathan is currently in 5th grade at Melillo Middle School where he is enrolled in the Gifted & Talented Program. At school he has interests in math, science, computers, and robotics. He has been involved in the robotics club at school for the past two years and has competed in tournaments in the Houston area. Personally, he likes anything that involves building and problem solving. His other interests include Karate and Cub Scouts. Nathan has enjoyed building his pinewood derby car every year and has won at the pack level and district level.

Nathan was first introduced to railroading by his grandfather, Chuck Lind, MMR, who gave him his first Thomas the Tank train set as a toddler. Since then, Nathan has enjoyed adding to his collection and creating his own little world many times over. He has attended many train shows and enjoys helping out with operating his grandfather's layout when it is open for tours."

New Events page for the Division 8 web site

The Division 8 web site will soon host a new page devoted to model railroading events occurring within the Lone Star Region and nationally. If you or your Division would like to be listed on this page, please send your event, date, time and location to Jim Lemmond's email address: jimlem@comcast.net

Director-At-Large Marc LaChey reported:

Tradition: an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or social custom) (Merriam-Webster)

As a student at Baylor University in the early 1970's, I tried to get to Baylor's football games at Floyd Casey Stadium early. I would watch and listen to the Baylor University Golden Wave marching band enter the stadium and march around the track surrounding the field while playing Young Lions. That memory remains a significant part of my memory of my time at Baylor.

In 2003, I attended and participated in my first Lone Star Region Convention. It was the 50th anniversary convention. The venue was great, the clinics were great, the banquet was great and I had a great time. Since then I have attended every LSR convention held in the Dallas Fort Worth area. I even served as chairman of the Lone Star Express Convention in 2013. Not only did I learn a lot about what it takes to produce a convention, I learned (or was told) what was expected to occur by the elders of the Lone Star Region.

It was made clear to me that the convention had to start on Wednesday evening. The convention had to make layouts available for operating sessions and tours. It was a given that we would have clinics for both the men (rail) and women (non rail). There would be a contest room, a banquet on Saturday night with guest speaker and finally, there would be the annual meeting on Sunday morning. The convention therefore included almost everything that folks expected to take place by tradition. I did balk at having an auction room for folks to sell off their extra or unwanted model and prototype railroad items. I will always remember the reaction that I received from an attendee when they asked during registration where they auction room was. Clearly I had upset this person's expectations or convention tradition.

In the years before the 2013 convention, it was tradition that the host city for the convention would rotate between the four major metropolitan areas in Texas and then, every fifth year, we visited what some called a "wild card" city. It was a great tradition and it spread the work and responsibility of producing a convention among a number of our groups and members. But then…something changed.

For reasons still not know to me, members down in San Antonio were no longer willing or interested in hosting a convention. So whether I liked it or not, the tradition was changed.

As I write this, I am unaware of a group volunteering to host the 2018 convention. Is the tradition of having an annual convention about to change again or horror of horrors, come to an end?

Over the years, presumptive LSR President, Chuck Lind and I have talked about different conventions that we have attended. We have also discussed different ways for the LSR convention to be produced. During those discussions, we have talked about changing the nature of our convention venue. Do we really need a hotel with lots of meeting room space? Do we really need a banquet on Saturday evening to be followed by our annual meeting on Sunday morning? We have discussed how we can collect together as a group of model railroaders, share our ideas and enthusiasm, but perhaps in ways that are different from the past. At present, I'm thinking that the lack of willing convention host cities will force us to rethink and reconsider our traditional convention.

In September 2014, I attended the very first Baylor football game at the new McLane Stadium. As in the past, I expected the Golden Wave Marching Band to enter the stadium to the sound of Young Lions. But, something had changed. Whether it was the lack of track space around the field or just the new venue, I can't say. But I am still sad not to hear Young Lions played by the band as the band enters the stadium before each home game.

But then I think back on old Floyd Casey Stadium. And I look around at the new McLane Stadium. Would I trade my new experience at McLane Stadium for the old stadium? Not on your life. Perhaps it is time to make some new traditions within the LSR.

Director-At-Large Blake Bogs reported:

Clinic given-

June 2016 at Lone Star Region Convention – Decoder Pro
August 2016 at Petticoat Junction Group in Spring, Tx- Choosing a model
Both have been submitted to the secretary

Attended the Division 4 NMRA Meet in October 2016

Very Well Attended
Viewed the following layouts during the tour

David and Sam Nicastro
Brian Helms
Charles Etheredge
Chuck Ellis
Riley Triggs

Took over Nomination Committee on November 1, 2016 from Steve Blackson See nomination report for more information

Marker Lamp:

Started Nomination/Director at Large report back up in the fall issue

Articles will restart in the next issue that is published

Director-At-Large Riley Triggs reported:

Report of year's activities

After being appointed to fill the vacancy left by Steve Blackson on 1 December 2016, I have participated in helping with our CenTex Division bi-monthly educational meetings. I substituted for Peter Kazmir at the most recent meeting on 14 January to facilitate educational clinics on the NMRA archive by Jack Merkel and a clinic by Pete Guy about a program he wrote to help prepare for operating sessions on his railroad.

I have also been assisting Peter Kazmir with reviving the Austin show. Things are still firming up, but the potential venue is the new Williamson County Expo Center in Taylor for the first weekend in May.

In addition, I am helping to organize a club based in the CenTex Division for a modular layout and a future permanent layout. I have been on the standards, layout design, and real estate committees. We are progressing well, with a theme, standards, and procedures all being developed. It is hoped that we can have enough modules for setting up at the revived Austin show in May of this year.

Areas to address

I have also begun polling the members I come into contact with about what they would like the LSR to improve on, special projects they might like to see happen, and any issues in general they would like addressed. I hope to have some action items for the yearly meeting at the convention this summer.

Department Reports

Achievement Chair Duane Richardson reported:

Since the 2016 Convention, the following AP Awards have been given:

Roy Stockard - Scenery
Marc LaChey - Scenery
Jeff Palmer - Official
Joseph Sorensen - Structures
Steve Jackobs - Golden Spike
Mike Mackey - Structures

Contest Co-chairs Chuck Lind and Loren Neufeld reported:

We have purchased the needed supplies for the contest in Houston. We will be needing judges so if interested please contact Loren or Chuck in the contest room to volunteer. We had a good contest last year, so let's keep up the work.

Convention Chair, Officer Position open - No Report

Historian Chair Jim Long not present – No Report.

Nominating Chair Blake Bogs reported:

I took over for Steve Blackson November 1, 2016. We have 6 people running for office. They are:

President= Chuck Lind
Treasure= Gert 'Jim' Muller "Speed"
Division 1= Mike Mackey
Division 3= Donna Orr
Division 5= Dave Lambert
Division 7= Don Kimmel

Election will take place March 1, 2017 to March 31, 2017.

I recently ran the BOD election to Replace Steve Blackson. Riley Triggs was elected to the position.

Non-Rail Virginia Feritag not present – No Report.

Publications Chair Riley Triggs reported:

The emphasis continues to be on the regular column contributors providing a strong base of material. Gert "Speed" Muller, Blake Bogs, Peter Kazmir and Duane Richardson are doing a tremendous job at producing interesting, informative and educational material for our membership.

I would like to bring focus on featuring layouts of region members, as well as contest and AP recognition. The contest and AP recognition have had an increased presence in the ML, and the interest in layout features is growing. I will need to take a more active role in producing the layout content.

Areas to address

Advertising in Pike and Dealer ads still need attention. There has been some interest in upgrading ads to color, but no new pike nor dealers are participating. There has been no particular effort to acquire new ads this year, but this is an ongoing situation.

Acquiring metrics on downloads is an ongoing project to assess how we are serving the membership, and how many people from outside the region are downloading our publication.

Long term projects update

Major projects are on hold to gather time and resources to accomplish them.

Website Chair Jeff Palmer reported that:

It's been an eventful 6 months. In October, the LSR website was hacked and destroyed. Unfortunately, the investigation droned on, so the LSR site was moved and brought up on a new host. Unfortunately the new host site decide to stop doing business in December, so the site had to be moved again. The LSR now has its own account with a new hosting service; Chris Atkins had generously allowed the LSR to use part of his reseller account up until now, but with our increasing demand for resources, storage and bandwidth, it was time for the LSR to get its own site. The issues forced a rethinking of how to make information available our audience; bandwidth had become an issue for the site in recent times. To address this issue, all of the downloadable articles, Marker Lamp and Clinics, were moved to an archive site, thus eliminating most of the download issue; reducing bandwidth demands. Currently, the only downloadable articles remaining on the website include the Constitution, By-Laws, 501(c)(3) information and officer's only information. I will be moving most of this information off of the site and onto the archive site also. The second issue was the need for userIDs to login to use the blog; this is where it is believed our site was breached. Since I was the main blogger, with very little activity from others, the blog has been eliminated from the website. This eliminates the need to create and manage 1100 member accounts. If there is a need to blog, the LSR Facebook account is available and better suited for this activity. This means only officers will be allowed to login to the site. The rules for these accounts is simple, if an officer does not use the account quarterly, that account will be suspended. All this means is, the webchair must be contacted to re-activate the account.

On the website, the Division structure has been changed. There is a page for each Division. The HOME button is normally a brief page describing that division or a message from the Division Director. For Division 4 and 8,

the HOME button will take the member to the home page of the website for that Division. The CREW button are key members of that Division. For Divisions that are 501(c)(3), this could be the officers of that charity. The COUNTIES/ PARISHES button speaks for itself. The LAYOUT button or MORE button if you wish, could be a schedule, advertisement for a major contributor(s) to the division, layouts, or other information. Just contact me and we'll work it out. The reason for the change is, I received several phone calls from persons who moved into the LSR but could not locate which Division they belonged too. As I researched the Division sites, there wasn't any information about the area covered by that Division.

As to the Officer's Page, the security methodology has changed on how to secure site content, and I'm still in the process of learning how to work with the new approach. For those of you who want to view the Officer's Page, use the following URL - http://www.lonestarregion.com/node/7. Please remember, right now security is by obscurity or the general lack of availability of the material. No logon required. Don't share.

In spite of all the site issues, all of the election bios are available for review, the 2017 LSR Convention logo and link is available, and there was no disruption of MailChimp mailings - there have been 15 MailChimp mailings done in the last 6 months. I will begin building the election site in January.

The website www.geekwithtrains.com is being prepared for the next general election. The election of Division Directors 1,3,5,7, LSR President, and LSR Treasurer.

Youth Chair, Officer Position open - No Report.

Education Chair, Bob Barnett reports:

The Purpose of this recurring report is to document the Educational Programs and Presentations prepared and presented by the Lone Star Region, the various Divisions that are a part of the Region and at All-NMRA clubs located around the Region. The preparer intends to not only document what has been presented but create a record of what programs, clinics and presentations are available for potential use at future NMRA/LSR sponsored or sanctioned events.

Educational Presentations and Clinics Presented at LSR, Division and All-NMRA Club Events on 2016

2016 Lone Star Region Convention June 22 through 26, 2016 Arlington, Texas

1. "Basic Scenery" by Miles and Fran Hale: Use of Woodlands Scenic Products to create scenery for small diorama.
2. "Scratch Build a Bridge" by Miles and Fran Hale: Learning scratch building techniques and skills while building a small bridge that can be taken home for your layout.
3. "Hands On, Advanced Wood Craftsman Kit" by Miles and Fran Hale: Clinic designed to expand your building skills using common modeling tools and materials Using pre-cut wood the participants built a small miners cabin for take home use.
4. "3D Printing" by Andrew Thomas: Clinic shows the latest tips and tricks on 3D printing from a company that makes 3D printers.
5. "How to Mount Switch Machines" by Don Murphy: Don displays and discusses his techniques for installing switch machines including those hard to get to locations.
6. "Modeling for Competition" by Duane Richardson: Modeling for the Contest Rom and the Achievement Program is more than just assembling the model. Duane discusses the construction, detailing, super detailing, finishing and weathering for building models for the Contest Room
7. A Tale of Two Structures" by Bob Brendel and Duane Richardson: Bob and Duane have both built the same structure: Bob in styrene and Duane in wood. They will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each material and method. The techniques for building, finishing and detailing the models in both mediums will be discussed.
8. "Remote Dispatching Using JMRI" by Nicastro and Hershman: Sam Nicastro and his associate discuss setting up for and dispatching a railroad from a remote location using JMRI.
9. "Meet the NMRA President" by Charlie Getz: Participants are invited to come and join NMRA President Charlie Getz for a no-holds bared question and answer session on the NMRA.
10. "Grain Elevators" by Bob Barnett: Bob will discuss the development of the grain elevator with photos

and illustrations of the evolution from wood to steel to concrete grain elevators. The role of small country elevators, gathering elevators, the giant terminal elevators located along the Mississippi and in port cities and the rail shipping network that connected them will be discussed.

11. "Microcontrollers and Layout Amination" by Rick Jones" Rick is and instrumentation specialist and he will discuss and illustrate how to use inexpensive hobbyist microcontroller boards to make things happen on your layout.

12. "Layout Planning" by Jerry Hoverson: It takes nerve to tear down a beautiful and good operating layout and start all over again; but that's exactly what MMR Jerry Hoverson did. Jerry will discuss the planning and hidden things you will need to consider prior to actually beginning construction on your new railroad.

13. "Building Your Own Turnouts" by John Garfield: John will discuss and demonstrate how to build your own turnouts following the Fast Tracks techniques using the Fast Tracks gigs for point and frog fabrication and the companies supplies for turnout construction. This clinic will show you the fastest way to learn the skills to hand lay your turnouts.

14. "Publicizing Your Layout of Club" by Riley Triggs: Marker Lamp Editor Riley Triggs will discuss tried and true methods for publicizing your layout or club and what you will need to do to make it happen.

15. "Brakeman" by Riley Triggs: Riley will give tips and techniques for playing the operations game "Brakeman."

16. "Lightweight Modules" by George Bohn: Every year the Southeast Texas Model Railroad Club moves their layout to set up a various train shows, including the 90 mile trek to set up at the Greater Houston Train Show for the past several years. George will discuss and show techniques for constructing lightweight modules that can be handled easily by one person and will survive the rigors of multiple moves.

17. "Tuning your DCC WOW Sound Decoder" by Bill Burkett: Don't just install your sound decoders and forget them. Bill will demonstrate how to tune your DCC Decoders for maximum performance.

18. "Installing DCC Sound Decoders, You Can Do This" by Bill Burkett: Come and learn the secrets of installing DCC Decoders from a man that installs them for a living. Bill will discuss and demonstrate techniques for installing decoders.

19. "Red Brick Factories and Brown Boxcars" by Greg Johnson: Greg modeled the steel producing region of the Pennsy for several years. His layout included large and well-detailed industries typical of the 1900 to 1950's industrial dominance of what we now describe as the "Rust Belt". Greg will share his research and knowledge gained on how these industries operated and how to model them.

20. "Modeling the T&NO in N-Scale" by Greg Johnson: In recent years Greg has turned his modeling attention and skills to modeling the Texas & New Orleans in the East Texas and Houston area. Greg will update you on the design and construction status of his latest modeling venture.

21. "From Rail-Op to JMRI Advanced Car Forwarding" by Chris Adkins: Is your Rail-Op program shop worn and beginning to give problems? If you are wanting to convert to JMRI but don't want to do all the input typing; Chris will show you how.

22. "Cricut, the Poor Man's Laser" by Martin Hrabe: Come and learn how to make models from the moderator of the Facebook "Modeling with Cricut" group.

23. "Speed Matching Loksound with a SPROG" by Thomas Stephens: SPROG is a small DCC system optimized for programming decoders. A SPROG will also run a small layout. Thomas will show how to use SPROG to speed match several sound equipped locomotives as well as giving tips on Loksound.

24. "JMRI Including Decoder Pro Basic Programming" by Blake Boggs: Want to learn how to program your DCC Decodes using JMRI Decoder Pro? Blake will discuss and demonstrate the techniques and tip for programming with JMRI.

25. "Building the Gold Creek Timber Company" by Jim Lemmond and Loren Neufeld: Two outstanding modelers discuss how they designed and built this award winning portable On3 Railroad depicting timber operations in the high country.

26. "Brass Engines and their Value" by Bill Seifert: Do you have older brass engines and you are not sure what they are worth. Come hear collector and long-time brass expert discuss the current state of brass collecting and valuation.

27. "Setting the Scene" by John Lowrance: The clinic is based on the observation that "Today we have the very best selection of highly detailed structures, vehicles, figures, details, and scenery products ever available in the history of model railroading, yet many people still have difficulty mixing these components together into a realistic scene." The clinic will provide some basic insights to help create realistic scenes. Some of the topics include: why scenery may be the most important part of your layout, nature's laws that must be followed, setting a season and time period, every scene tells a story, how much detail is needed, control of the view, placement of structures, and more.

28. "Creating a Realistic 'Palate' of Ground Cover Scenery Materials" by John Lowrance: Today there are so many Scenery products available to choose from, that it is difficult to know which one to buy. The goal of this clinic is to show how to select a set of ground cover materials and set a sequence for applying them. MMR John Lowrance will share his techniques for creating a "palate" of scenery materials. He will discuss: What do I need? What colors should I buy? What textures are needed? and, In what sequence should I apply them?

Lone Star Region Division 8 – Presentations for 2016

1.February 13, 2016 - "Building the Gold Creek Timber Company" by Jim Lemmond and Loren Neufeld: Two outstanding modelers discuss how they designed and built this award winning portable On3 Railroad depicting timber operations in the high country.

2.March 14, 2016 – "Hands-On Graffiti" by Paige Prater: Paige shares her techniques for adding graffiti to freight cars in the modern era. This is a hands-on clinic so bring a freight car to work on.

3.April 9, 2016- "Making a Tree Flocking Machine" by Ray Byer: Ray shows how he constructed a working tree flocking set up from readily available parts at very modest cost.

4.June 11, 2016 – Entering, Filling Out a Contest Entry Form (NMRA Contest Forms) –by Chuck Lind, MMR and Loren Neufeld, MMR: Chuck and Loren offer tips and techniques for completing the contest forms to highlight the work done in accordance with NMRA rules and custom. A critique of completed forms will be offered.

5.July 9, 2016 – Hands-On Decoder Installation by Ray Byer: Ray will conduct a hands on clinic showing the tips and techniques for installing DCC Decoders in locomotives. So bring and engine and decoder and learn for the pros.

6.September 10, 2016 – "Building Realistic Scenery" by Loren Neufeld: MMR Loren Neufeld has built scenery for several well-known model railroads. He discusses techniques and methods for creating realistic and eye-catching scenes.

7.November 12, 2016 - Railroading in England by Keith Hicks: Visitor form the United Kingdom will show digital slides and discuss railroad operations in selected regions of the UK.

San Jacinto Model Railroad Club - Presentations for 2016

1.January 4, 2016- "Operations on the Brownie 1979-1984" by David Currey: Former MP and UP Brakeman Dave Curry will discuss the operation on the St. Louis, Brownsville, & Mexico Railroad, in particular the upper division where he worked. I addition to describing the railroad, industries and track layout Dave will discuss some of his on-the -job experiences.

2.February 2, 2016 – "Using the Digitrax DCC Zephyr" by Mike Guley: The Digitrax Zephyr is a very versatile starter DCC system that has served on several Houston area operating layouts for many years. Mike will discuss setting up the Zephyr for use and maximizing the performance for your railroad.

3.March 1, 2016 - "A Life of Railroading" by Bruce Blalock: Bruce Blalock is a retired Union Pacific Trainman and Engineer. He is well known around Houston and Texas and has spoken at several San Jac, Lone Star Region and Katy Railroad Historical Society events. An animated story-teller come enjoy Bruce's insights into rung the real thing!!

4.April 5, 2016 – "LED Lighting "by Steve Sandifer: MMR Steve Sandifer is well known around the Gulf Coast and all of Texas as an outstanding prototype modeler. He now turns his sights on installing LEDS in cabooses, locomotives, structures, and street lighting. Steve will discuss and demonstrate installing LED into some very difficult locations.

5.May 3, 2016 – " Estate and Insurance Planning" by Chuck Lind: MMR and long-time modeler Chuck Lind will discuss using the NMRA sponsored Collection Insurance for protecting your collection and setting up the

proper records for documenting your model railroad estate for a time when others may be called upon to handle it.

6.June 6, 2016 – "AG 101 Cotton Gins to Grain Elevators" by Bob Barnett: By the time this clinic was actually presented it was split into two presentations. For the June meeting, Bob discussed and showed digital photos of the history of grain elevators focusing on the types of elevators (wooden, steel tanks, and concrete bins). Included at the end of the program was a short video produced in Alberta Canada showing "a day in the life" of a typical small town elevator operator on the plains of western Canada. Bob promised to return after the harvest season to discuss cotton.

7.July 5, 2016 – "Dirt Track Railroad" by Tom Palmer: Noted Katy modeler and historian, Tom Palmer takes on a new challenge. Tom will discuss and document with the few photographs in existence, the Texas Western Railroad, a narrow gauge line that extended from Houston west into the Cotton plantation county around Katy and San Felipe. Many Houston area modelers have vaguely heard of the Texas Western but know little about the line or its operations. Come and learn!!

8.August 2, 2016 – "Easy Backdrop Painting" by Pete Leach: Pete will discuss and illustrate his technique for easy preparation and paining of back drops. Come and learn from Pete's innovative techniques for painting backdrops.

9.September 6, 2016 – "The Tehachapi Loop" by Jeff Williams: Jeff will present a photo documentary of the famed Tehachapi Loop in Southern California including the lines that operated the loop, the surrounding area, and the trains that used Tehachapi.

10. October 4, 2016 – "My Alaskan Trip to the White Pass" by Bob Laroe: Bob will present a program on the history, construction and geography pf the Yukon and White Pass Railroad in particular his personal visit to ride it. Come and learn about his off-discussed but not-to-often visited railroad "way up north".

11. November 8, 2016 – "The Cotton Industry and Modeling Opportunities" by Bob Barnett: Bob returns "after the crop is in" to discuss this often overlooked industry that was vital to Texas and the South. Bob will discuss the harvest, local gins, the compresses, the port city compresses and the general handing and shipping of cotton.

12. December 2016 – No Presentation as the San Jacinto Club Christmas Party was hosted by the Freitags.

LSR Division 3 2016 Presentations

I have discussed including Division 3 monthly presentations in this document and will contact the Directors in Division 1 and Division 5 regarding including their meeting presentation as part of this record.

Events Chair, Bill Dryden - No Report.

Membership Chairs Larry Swigert - No Report.

Photography, Dave Lamberts No Report.

Parliamentarian, John Garfield No Report.

OLD BUSINESS

The first item up was the Beaumont 2015 Convention Close. With the failure to close the convention books, it was felt that a BOD vote was needed to close the books as they are noting that George Bohn and the convention committee failed to close the books satisfactorily, noting that $1,100 was unaccounted for, and that George Bohn refused to do the simple accounting procedure of listing supplies bought and the approximate amount spent. 2017-01-21 LSR Motion 2a passed to accept the accounting as is and to amend Article V of the By-Laws, the stricter requirements for convention accounting (see Motion 4). The motion passed.

The second part to 2017-01-21 LSR Motion 2b was to cincture George Bohn by not allowing him to run for office for a period of 5 years. Donna had the 8 votes necessary to pass the motion, but after extensive discussion

that followed, the motion was modified to include stricter accounting guidelines to Article V Convention of the LSR By-Laws - 2017-01-21 LSR Motion 2b passed.

John Garfield and Mike Mackey closed the books on the 2016 Convention. They presented the final financials prepared by Ken Kaiser, and all funds were distributed as outlined in the By-Laws. Donna Orr praised the books and the manner in which they were prepared, referring to them as "Best in Class".

Donna Orr briefly discussed her plan to stagger the LSR funds in CDs over the next year to allow each CD to reach maturity at a different time. This plan was presented and approved at the June BOD meeting. This was more of a status report.

Donna Orr also gave the status of the distribution of Educational funds to the divisions.

Jeff Palmer reminded the board of the vacancies for Youth Chair and Convention Chair. In the discussion that followed, Chuck Lind, the future LSR President (running unopposed), asked that the positions be left open. He wanted to fill those posts. The board agreed.

Blake Bogs presented the latest edition of the Youth Brochure. It was meet with overwhelming approval and Black is moving forward with its printing.

Jeff Palmer represented the Officer Misconduct motion (2017-01-21 LSR Motion 3) which is a direct copy of the procedure and policy from the NMRA Executive Handbook. The motion passed and the following will be added to the LSR By-Laws under Article III – Duties of Officers:

12. Should an elected officer be suspected of misuse of office, misconduct, detrimental performance, or malfeasance in office, the officer can be removed by the following procedures:

A. A written petition against the officer, signed by a majority of the Board of Directors, must be submitted to all members of the Board. Upon receipt by the Board and the officers, the officer will be immediately suspended.

B. Within sixty (60) days thereafter, the Board shall meet to hear from the accused and the accusers.

C. If the Board feels that the charges are sustained, a three-fourths majority vote in favor of a motion to remove the officer from office will effect the action. If not, the officer shall be reinstated.

malfeasance - A term used in Tort Law to describe an act that is legal but performed improperly. An affirmative act that though legal, causes harm.

NEW BUSINESS

Steve Barkley opened the new business portion of the meeting with the acknowledgement Riley Triggs as the new AT-Large Director replacing Steve Blackson who stepped down. Steve also thanked Blake Bogs for stepping up to take on the Nomination Chair also vacated by Steve Blackson.

Bill McPherson presented Motion 4 (2017-01-21 LSR BOD Motion 04), a major revision of Article V – Convention of the LSR By-Laws. It brings into focus out 501(c)(3) needs for better financial reporting, as well as, our IRS and State reporting obligations. It allows for greater flexibility in the scheduling out mid-year BOD meeting, and separates the Annual BOD meeting from the LSR Convention. The motion passed as seen below:

1. The annual LSR convention shall be known as the "Lone Star Region (Year) Convention." On all contracts and agreements relative to a Lone Star Region convention, the name of the LSR organization shall be shown as the "Lone Star Region-NMRA" for consistency purposes. No variations are permitted regardless of whether or not the LSR loans money to the Host Group, as provided in Section 9 of Article 5 herein.

2. The Lone Star Region (Year) Convention shall be hosted, planned, managed, and conducted by any local model railroad group or organization in the Lone Star Region in accordance with the requirements and provisions stated in these By-Laws and/or the Lone Star Region Convention Guide. In these By-Laws, this group or organization shall be referred to as the Host Group.

3. The policy of the Lone Star Region is that a person must be a member in good standing of the National Model Railroad Association (or a person in the family of the member) in order to register for and participate in the activities of the Lone Star Region (Year) Convention. By reciprocal agreement, membership in other National Model Railroad Association Regions shall be honored for registration.

4. Prospective Host Groups are encouraged to "think outside of the box" for new ideas for the activities, location, and events for the LSR conventions. A prospective Host Group or organization shall present its bid for a

Lone Star Region Convention to the LSR Board of Directors for approval and selection no later than two (2) years prior to the convention date.

The bid presentation shall include:

a) Preliminary information about the proposed convention ideas and the venue or hotel facilities for standard LSR conventions, such as clinics, contests, banquet, guest room rates, and minimum room blocks

b) Special attractions and events unique to the convention city and area

c) Preliminary income estimates from registration and other sources

d) Preliminary expense estimates for the venue facilities, meals and related service charges; and other convention activities.

To assist in these bid proposals, convention planning guides, venue requirements, and income-expense spreadsheets will be provided by the LSR (utilizing Microsoft Word and Excel or similar programs), and are to be used for the venue documentation and the income and expense projections. The Host Group convention staff must have some members who are proficient in the use of personal computer programs and basic financial accounting.

5. The 501(c) (3) certification, authorized by the Internal Revenue Service on January 23, 2015, is issued only to the Lone Star Region as the parent organization. The IRS is entitled to obtain from the Lone Star Region information and/or justification about its education programs, activities, and financial considerations. Since the annual Lone Star Region Conventions are the primary Regional activity of the Lone Star Region and are the primary source of income for the Region , the contractual and financial responsibilities, liabilities, and other actions by a Host Group are the ultimate responsibilities of the Lone Star Region, its officers and members.

Therefore, the Lone Star Region must have oversight control over the LSR Regional Conventions to effectively administer the IRS requirements. To partially accomplish this the Regional Convention Committee is hereby established to provide general oversight of the LSR Regional Conventions including but not limited to all contracts and agreements, schedules, fees, expenses, financial status, key personnel, or any other issues that might impact a LSR convention.

The Regional Convention Committee shall be comprised of the LSR President, LSR Vice-President, Treasurer, and Regional Convention Chairman. The Regional Convention Chairman shall be the chairman of this Regional Convention Committee. The Host Group shall be responsible to this committee.

6. The final negotiated versions of all contacts or agreements must be reviewed and approved in writing by the Regional Convention Committee before these contracts may be executed by the Host Group for the following:

a) Hotel or meeting venue facilities and equipment

b) Costs and minimum guarantees of food and beverage meal events (either provided by a hotel or outside caterer) including all service fees, gratuities, and taxes

c) Other services relative to the LSR annual convention, such as transportation or equipment rentals.

7. The Host Group shall submit periodically a standardized Lone Star Region Convention Progress Report to the Regional Convention Committee. This Progress Report will provide the following information:

a) General information about the progress of the convention and any situations encountered or anticipated. Microsoft Word or a similar computer program shall be used for this report.

b) Changed or new contractual agreements discussed in Paragraph 6 herein

c) Revised or updated estimates of projected convention attendance, incomes from all sources, expenses for the convention venue or hotel facilities, meal expenses and service charges; tour and clinic expenses; other convention expenses, and profit projections. The LSR will provide the financial report format in Microsoft Excel.

These Convention Progress Reports will be due at the end of each 6 month period for the second year preceding the convention start date; at the end of each calendar quarter during the year immediately preceding the convention start date, or at other interim times should conditions deem the need. The final Convention Progress Report is to be submitted two (2) weeks prior to the starting date of the convention.

The Regional Convention Committee will review these Convention Progress Reports and discuss any concerns or recommendations with the Host Group . The final Convention Progress Report must be approval by the Regional Convention Committee.

8. The Internal Revenue Service 501 (c) (3) certification is issued specifically only to the Lone Star Region and not to any other LSR subdivisions, such as the divisions, or a convention. Therefore, it is essential that all convention income and all expenses must be reported in the LSR Convention Report. All expenditures must have an original receipt for the services obtained and be cross-referenced to the applicable line-item in the LSR Convention Report; otherwise, the expenditure will be considered a donation to the convention and paid totally by the Host Group. These original receipts shall be delivered to the LSR Treasurer for permanent retention at the same time the LSR Convention Report is submitted as provided herein.

9. A LSR Advance Expenses Loan, not to exceed two thousand dollars ($2,000.00) may be advanced to the Host Group with such money to be withdrawn from the Lone Star Region's Region Convention Fund. One thousand dollars ($1,000.00) of the loan may be requested by the Host Group not earlier than two years prior to the Convention. An additional loan not to exceed one thousand dollars ($1,000.00) may be requested by the Host Group not earlier than one year prior to the Convention. Requests for advance loans must be addressed in writing to the Chair, Regional Convention Committee who will coordinate and authorize the disbursement. These Advanced Expense Loans are to be repaid in full to the Lone Star Region's Region Convention Fund before any distributions of prof its derived from the convention are made. Please note the following:

a) The LSR loans MUST be applied for in the form of a written request. If other non-LSR regional funds are used, the LSR BOD must be notified in writing within two (2) weeks from the request for these other funds.

b) If LSR loans are requested, the LSR Treasurer will be a part of the Host Convention financial group and will have visibility into all financial activity including the checking account for that convention.

c) All expenditures must have an original receipt for the services obtained and be cross-referenced to the applicable line-item in the LSR Convention Report; otherwise, the expenditure will be considered a donation to the convention and absorbed by the Host Group. These original receipts shall be delivered timely to the LSR Treasurer for permanent retention.

10. A per capita fee of two dollars ($2.00) is to be paid to the Lone Star Region's Region Convention Fund for each member of the Lone Star Region, or member of another National Model Railroad Association Region, registered for the Convention. The per capita fee is not required for persons in the family of the member unless such persons hold membership in the Region in their own right. This per capita fee is to be paid to the LSR before any distributions of profits derived from the LSR Annual Convention are made.

11. An amount equal to five percent (5%) of the gross proceeds from an auction conducted during the Convention shall be remitted to the Lone Star Region's Region Convention Fund. The remaining five percent (5%) shall accrue to the Host Group of the Convention. This auction proceed is to be paid to the LSR before any distributions of profits derived from the LSR Annual Convention are made.

12. An amount equal to fifty percent (50%) of the surplus of Convention monetary income over Convention-incurred expenses shall be remitted to the Lone Star Region's Region Convention Fund. Income from auction gross proceeds and from the per capital fee collection shall not be included when determining the Convention monetary income.

13. The Host Group shall retain one-hundred percent (100%) of any convention raffle revenue except in the event the financial activities of the LSR Annual Convention result in a monetary loss as provided herein. To provide backup data for the IRS 501(c)(3) regulations, the income and expenses directly related to the convention raffle shall be reported in the Financial Data -- Non-Shared Income and Expense portion of the LSR Convention Report. The raffle must be conducted during the established convention dates.

14. In the event the financial activities of a LSR Annual Convention result in a monetary loss, all incomes regardless of their sources shall be included in the "Total Convention Income" for the purposes of settling any financial obligations of the Host Group relative to the LSR Convention and determining the monetary distributions between the Lone Star Region and the Host Group. Any surplus funds remaining after the mandatory payments have been made are distributed as provided herein.

15. Should the Host Group conduct a Train Show or sell items concurrently with the Convention (e.g. a Company Store) , all monetary income and all expenses associated with the Train Show or sale of items shall accrue to the Host Group and shall be excluded when determining Convention monetary income and Convention-incurred expenses except in the event of a monetary loss as stated in Section 14 of Article V.

16. A NMRA Board Resolution in February 2011 specifies that all merchandise sold by the NMRA, including by Regions and Divisions, must conform to any applicable NMRA standards. The following language must be included in merchandise contracts with vendors:

All merchandise shall conform to all applicable NMRA Standards, and this term is a substantial and material term of the contract requiring strict conformance. The manufacturer may either submit the product to the NMRA for conformance testing or the manufacturer may certify conformance by utilizing the procedures for self-certification pursuant to the process guidelines promulgated by the Conformance and Inspection Department of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. Any merchandise not conforming to the applicable standards will be non-conforming and rejected.

17. The Host Group shall pay the remittances prescribed by these LSR By-Laws for the Lone Star Region Convention Fund to the Region Treasurer as follows:

a) The per capita fee shall be remitted not later than thirty days after end of the Convention.

b) Repayment of the advance loan; remittance of the auction proceeds share; remittance of the Region's share of the Convention monetary surplus, and all other financial matters relative to the convention shall be made by December 15 of the calendar year in which the Convention is held.

18. The Host Group shall prepare and submit a statistical and financial Lone Star Region Convention Report in the format specified by the Chair of the Regional Convention Committee:

a) A preliminary convention report shall be submitted to the Chair of the Regional Convention Committee by October 1 following the annual convention. This preliminary report will be reviewed by the Regional Convention Committee which will submit comments back to the Host Group.

b) The books and records of the convention will be tentatively finalized by December 1 after the closing date of the convention. The final LSR Convention Report shall be submitted by the Host Group to the Regional Convention Chairman for review by December 1 following the convention.

c) This final Convention Report shall then be presented for initial review to the Board of Directors by December 31. At the first Board meeting, (mid-year or annual) following the close of the Convention, the Board will act for approval or disapproval of the report. If the Board of Directors votes to accept and approve this Convention Report, the books and records of the subject convention will then be closed.

19. Liability insurance for inside activities of a Convention shall be provided under the master policy of the NMRA. The cost of the liability insurance rider will be paid by the Region.

20. It is the responsibility of the current year convention Host Group to provide meeting facilities for the following scheduled future Board of Directors meetings:

a) Mid-Year – If the Board of Directors determines it is necessary to hold a Mid-Year Board meeting, it will be held after the first of the year and prior to Super Bowl weekend, unless otherwise approved by the LSR BOD.

b) Annual – Held during the convention week, unless otherwise approved by the LSR BOD

Jim Lemmond presented Nathan Lind for the Division 8 Youth Award (2017-01-21 LSR BOD Motion 05). The board passed the motion.

Blake Bogs reminded the BOD of the March Officer's election for President Treasurer, Division 1, 3, 5, 7 Directors.

Robert Ashcraft and Randall Wilson updated the board on the progress for the 2017 Convention. They reminded the board that the Convention website is up and is accepting registration - http://bayoucitylimited.org/

Steve Barkley closed the meeting at 11:35 AM

Mid-Continent Region Car Project

The Mid-Continent Region of the NMRA is offering as its current car project a set of six 40' wood refrigerator car kits lettered for the St. Louis Refrigerator Car Company. The cars are produced by Accurail and include trucks and Accumate couplers. Car numbers in this set are 4265, 4317, 4280, 4302, 4894, and 4836 and unique to this project.

St. Louis Refrigerator Car Company was established in 1878 by Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company to transport its products across the U. S. At its peak about 1920 the reefer fleet was made up of over 5000 cars. The build date on these cars is 10-42. The cars are priced at $25.00 for one car, $24.50 each for two cars, $24.00 each for four cars and $23.00 each for all six cars. Shipping is USPS flt rate based on the number of cars ordered.

To order: http://www.mcor-nmra.org/Regional- Car-Kit.php

ML

NMRA Layout Directory

Work is underway on a new program to create a member Layout Directory. This will replace the visitation feature of the old NMRA Pike Registry Program.

The Layout Directory will be an on-line system that allows NMRA members (only) to:

- Identify the layouts of participating NMRA members by location, scale, gauge, era, prototype and area modeled, etc.
- Review the particular features of the layouts
- Contact layout owners to arrange visits or exchange common-interest information

Layout owner participation will be voluntary and built-in security features will protect privacy.

A working group has been formed to develop the Directory and input is needed from NMRA members.

One of the first tasks of the group is to survey layout owners from the old Pike Registry and visitors to their layouts to determine:

- What visitation aspects worked
- What didn't work
- What features they liked
- What features they didn't like
- Suggestions for the new Layout Directory

The working group also will survey other NMRA members who either own layouts or are interested in visiting layouts to determine what they expect from a directory, what concerns they may have and suggestions in general.

NMRA members are invited to comment by contacting the working group chairman, Bob Chaparro, at chiefbobbb@verizon.net or 951-925-2069.

Members interested in having their layouts included in the Layout Directory also should contact Bob. ML

Nominations

Blake Bogs
superchief15@yahoo.com

Howdy y'all. Nominations have now closed and the election is coming up quickly. This year's election will run March 1st- March 31st. Make sure you watch your email accounts for the polls to open up and vote! We have some great candidates that are prepared to serve this organization over the next 2 years. My thanks to all the candidates for agreeing to serve the LSR.

The Christmas holidays are unfortunately over and school is in full force again. I was able to get some modeling done over the holidays, but once again not as much as I would have liked. Let me recap the last 3 months.

Petticoat Junction: Petticoat Junction has been amazing the last couple of months. We had the annual open house and the models came out! We had Marc Vandendriessche bring out his latest model while Jim Brandenburg brought out his diorama that he is working on for the convention. On top of these models, we had a small Z scale module layout and a N Scale module layout. If I am missing any models, I apologize. December was our Christmas party with a clinic from John Lockwood updating us on what is happening in the Tomball Depot. January brought us a clinic from Pete Leach. In February, Jim Brandenburg gave us a clinic on the Denver O Scale Layout which was featured in Union Station for over 50 years. If you are ever in the area on the first Friday of the month at 6 PM, come join us! We meet at Valley Ranch BBQ in Spring, TX

Layout: I now have ballast! Before open house, I made the rush to put ballast down. I spent 2-3 hours the night before open house working out the kinks and am proud to say in 10 hours of the layout running, I only had one derailment. I am still working out some kinks with the ballast and glue but it is coming along. I worked on fitting my station on my layout in December. It looks fantastic sitting by the track now. It's always good to see your work come together.

Layout Tours: If you read my article in the last issue, you saw the San Jac had its annual layout tours. We had some great layouts open. I was only able to see a fraction of them, but the ones I saw were great. My extreme thanks to everyone that was open on the tour.

Well that's pretty much a recap for the last few months. Don't forget to vote in the next election!!!

Keep them trains running!

ML

Director Reports

Cowcatcher Division 1

by Chris Atkins
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214.222.1285
cowcatcherdivision.com

Mike Mackey is preparing to take over as Division 1 director and is having meetings with his club, electing officers and making plans. Mike is also exploring the division becoming its own 501(c)(3). I suspended division wide meetings due to poor attendance.

We lost yet another of our long-time members, Jim Norwood. He is greatly missed.

I have continued to support the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs 2 annual train shows in Plano by providing 40-50 hours of work per season in addition to acting as the Council's President. The Division's continued involvement with the Council under Mike is not clear at this time. This year Division 1 members Don Murphey and Bill Huebner supported the show thru clinics and Kenneth Keiser by manning the information table. I also have presented clinics at the shows.

Bayou Division 2

by Rod Fredericks
fredericks.rod@gmail.com
225-939-0187

Since my last report in October, recovery in the Baton Rouge area of the Bayou Division from the disastrous flooding in August has come a long way. My club, the Mid-South Model Railroad Club had 27 inches of water inside the building, not enough to reach the bottom of the layout, but high enough to submerge everything underneath, including the DCC and signaling systems, storage cabinets containing supplies, tools and off layout engines and rolling stock as well as sheetrock and floor carpet. Since then, club members and a number of non-member model railroaders have pitched in ripping out the flood damaged material, cleaning up the mess and rebuilding the damage. There is still a lot to be done. The signaling system still needs to be replaced, but as of last week, the first trains since July are running on the Mid-South.

Jim Loftland's Tall Timber home layout was also flooded as well as his house. Like the Mid-South, the water was not high enough to reach the layout, but everything below was ruined and had to be torn out. Much of the refurbishment has been done and he reports that trains are also running on it.

The Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroad Club north of the city in Jackson, LA did not suffer any flooding, but many of its members' homes were flooded. And thankfully, the flooding did not extent to the New Orleans area. The Crescent City Model Railroad Club in Metairie, LA. is alive and well as ever. Over the holiday season they have hosted numerous open houses, with large turnouts. In late October they also hosted a series of clinics and an operating session. Also, they have an excellent article on the club in the last issue of the Cow Catcher magazine. On a personal note, my area of Baton Rouge was not affected by the flood. However, a knee replacement has kept me from doing my work on my own layout. But the recovery is going fine and I have a few weeks to do some work here and at the club before getting the other knee replaced in March.

So that's all for now.

North East Texas Division 3

by Jerry Hoverson, MMR
jhoverson@tx.rr.com
972.540.5315

Hope everyone had a great Christmas Holiday and remained safe and sane for the New Years.

Well, here in the North, we're still having monthly get togethers, having fun and learning from each other. For our educational clinics this past quarter;

October: we wrapped up the Bus clinic and I gave a trip report complete with lots of photos from my trip to Hamburg Germany and Miniatur Wunderland.

November: we had a guest speaker, Bill Huebner, who gave us a very comprehensive and enlightening clinic on the use of an Air Brush and acrylic paints

In December, we held our annual Christmas Party with lots of food, drink, comradery, and just plain old fun. The White Elephant gift exchange was a ball, a lot more "stealing" of gifts this year had everyone laughing a lot.

We've postponed our January meeting 1 week for the January Plano Train show so any new members can attend.

Lot's more to come so, "keep rolling down the tracks", and we'll see you next time!

CenTex Division 4

by Peter Kazmir
pakazmir@gmail.com
CenTexNMRA.org

It has been an exciting and busy several months for Central Texas.

We had three Division meetups in September, November, and January. At the September meetup, David and Sam Nicastro gave a clinic on over 70 different methods for modeling rust. Afterwards, we toured Steve Jackobs' HO scale layout, and Mark Richert's O scale indoor and outdoor layouts. At the November meetup, Chuck Lind led a discussion about estate planning for model railroaders and we toured Michael Generali's HO scale layout. Jack Merkel is also doing a series of micro-clinics about the benefits of the NMRA at different meetups. Finally, at the January meetup, Pete Guy gave a presentation on how he defines his operating sessions and we toured Chuck Ellis' always-excellent Great Northwestern and Pacific.

Pictures and detailed recaps from each meetup, as well as pictures and information about these and other layouts across our Division, are posted on our website, centexnmra.org. The site also hosts a discussion board open to the public.

Our next meeting will be March 11 at the Austin Northwest Recreation Center. Details and directions are available at http://centexnmra.org/meeting.html.

The annual Temple Train Show was hosted by the Centra-Mod club in September and it was a great success like every year. The Division hosted a booth at the show and attracted several new members to the NMRA.

In addition, we hosted our yearly NMRA Meet in November. This event is something between a regular meetup and a regional convention. It is a one-day event that includes six clinics, stations to help members with model mechanical and electrical issues, two operating layouts (courtesy of the AustNtrak TTrak group and the Texas Brick Railroad - made of Legos!), a modeling contest, a raffle and door prizes. In addition, local layouts host operating sessions and open houses throughout the weekend. The event this year was successful with over 70 attendees including a few folks who took advantage of NMRA railpass membership. More information about the Meet is on our web site.

We are also happy to announce that members from our Division led by George Zapalac have started a new HO-scale club in the Austin area. The club is still in the planning phase (it doesn't even have a name yet), but has attracted over 40 members. At first the club will focus on modular layouts that can be assembled for operations or for show display,

but the long-term plan is to find a permanent location and build a permanent layout.

Finally, the most exciting news is that the Austin Model Railroad Jamboree is finally coming back after a multi-year hiatus. The newly-renamed Austin Area Train Show will be held May 6 and 7 at the Williamson County Expo Center, which is only a few minutes past the Dell Diamond in Taylor, Texas. This event will be much larger (more than 16,000 square feet) than the older Jamborees, including dozens of vendor tables and operating layouts on the show floor. We will also have clinics and a layout tour in conjunction with the show. Look for our ad elsewhere in the Marker Lamp!

This event is a fantastic opportunity to share knowledge, educate those interested in both life-sized and Model Railroading, to gain new NMRA members, and to have fun. We hope you can join us for the rebirth of this special Austin tradition that is over 40 years old!

Division 5

by Dave Lamberts
DavidWL1944@aol.com
806.792.7244

Not a lot to report from Division Five. We just raised our dues from $12.00 a year to $24.00 a year. So far no one has passed out.

Next month we will be holding our annual auction. I will describe the details of same in my next report.

If anyone would like to see a sample of the brochure let know and I will mail you one.

Division 6

by Kevin Bergeman
kevin.bergeman@gmail.com
210.488.4370

No report

Division 7

by Don Kimmell
elf4kcs@mac.com
318.798.7718

Greetings from cold North Louisiana- a great time to be modeling!

First off, the Annual Jefferson Train Days this year will be 20/21 May. Mark it on your calendar! If you have never attended, make a point of doing so. There will not be a whole lot of Vendors, one ticket is the "whole package"!—Train Show, train ride, vintage car tour and layout visit, all in one place… and it is all in walking distance! Hope to see you there.

I don't have the date for the Tyler show yet, or I can't find it, but it should be the later part of April. A fun small town show!

The ArkLaTex Modular Club just finished a tree(3) week run at the local Shrine Hospital. They always try to set up prior to Christmas, usually for two weeks, but this year, due to "popular demand", they extended an extra week. It seems there were a couple of patients who needed a little extra "train therapy", so the club was more than happy to comply with "Doctor's Orders". It seems that watching the trains takes their minds off of their condition. Neat!

The KCS" Holiday Express 2016 went off without any major model train issues. The elves did manage to get everything running-at least the "indoor" trains-without any major issues. This was an "east-west" year, with visits to North Texas, central and north Mississippi, north Louisiana along with a quick trip down to Port Arthur. The attendance was down a bit-rain will do that too you-but not too bad for a 16-year-old! Over $150,000.00 was raised and donated to the Salvation Army.

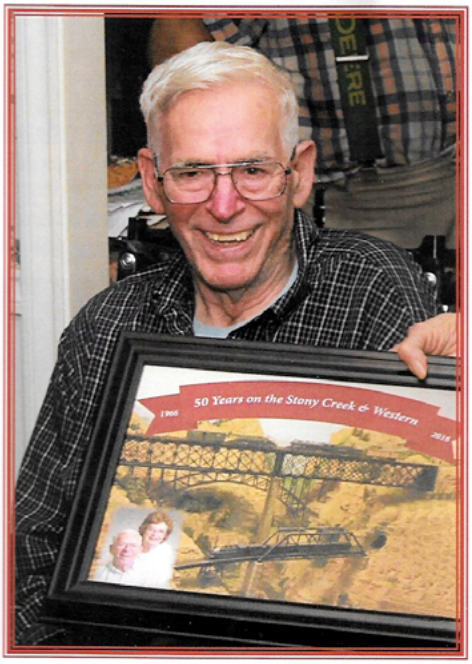
Lastly, do not forget this year's convention-Houston! And as everyone knows, they do a great convention. Hope to see you there!

Texas Gulf Division 8

by Jim Lemond
jimlem@verzion.net

Monthly clinics

The Division 8 executive committee has scheduled a meeting in January 2017 to create a calendar of events and clinics for the year. It has been suggested that the clinics sponsored by the Division will be a continuing series aimed at preparing attendees for entering NMRA type contests. Scratch building and kitbashing, are planned for major clinics. The clinicians are yet to be determined.



Fifty-year tribute to Gil Freitag, MMR

The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club surprised Gil and Virginia Freitag with a commemorative book published by the club honoring them and the fiftieth anniversary of the Stoney Creek & Western Model Railroad. The book included many photos of Gil and the layout. Charley Getz, NMRA President, included a special letter to Gil honoring his many years of NMRA activity. The book has a listing of all the publications about the Stoney Creek & Western. Included were articles by San Jacinto Model Railroad Club members relating to Gil's many accomplishments. The book was assembled and published by the staff of the "Derail", San Jacinto Model Railroad Club's official club publication. In charge of publication were Bob Sabol and Terri Brogoitti.

Greater Houston Model Train Show

The Greater Houston Train Show, sponsored by the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, is scheduled for February 18, 2017. The location for the train show is the Stafford Centre in Stafford, Texas off US Highway 59 on the Southwest side of Houston. Details are available at:
http://sanjacmodeltrains.org/GHTS/GHTS.html
The show starts at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 18, 2017. The show includes clinics, vendors and items of interest for all ages.

Lone Star Region 2017 Youth Award

Division 8 has sponsored Nathan Lind for the 2017 LSR Youth Award.

Nathan's father writes, "Nathan is currently in 5th grade at Melillo Middle School where he is enrolled in the Gifted & Talented Program. At school he has interests in math, science, computers, and robotics. He has been involved in the robotics club at school for the past two years and has competed in tournaments in the Houston area. Personally, he likes anything that involves building and problem solving. His other interests include Karate and Cub Scouts. Nathan has enjoyed building his pinewood derby car every year and has won at the pack level and district level.

Nathan was first introduced to railroading by his grandfather, Chuck Lind, MMR, who gave him his first Thomas the Tank train set as a toddler. Since then, Nathan has enjoyed adding to his collection and creating his own little world many times over. He has attended many train shows and enjoys helping out with operating his grandfather's layout when it is open for tours."

New Events page for the Division 8 web site

The Division 8 web site will soon host a new page devoted to model railroading events occurring within the Lone Star Region and nationally. If you or your Division would like to be listed on this page, please send your event, date, time and location to Jim Lemmond's email address: jimlem@comcast.net

Tresurer Report

Treasurer
by Donna Orr
dlo-rls@sbcglobal.net
(972) 342-8598

For the Third Fiscal Quarter of 2016/2017
Beginning Balance 011/01/2016

LSR Checking Accounts Total	**$ 8,440.57**
Vanguard CD Fund	**$20,434.46**
Vanguard Convention Fund	**$ 9541.99**
Total LSR Net Worth	**$38,417.02**

included in Total LSR Net Worth
Funds for the Bob Clark Award $570,

LSR Proceeds	
Convention Proceeds	**$ 192.00**
Pike Ad	**$ 16.00**
Total Proceeds	**$ 208.00**
LSR Disbursements	
Website costs	**$ 269.60**
Contest Expenses	**$ 98.50**
Total Disbursements	**$ 368.10**
Net Proceeds/ Disbursements	**$ -160.10**

Ending Balance 1/31/2017

LSR Checking Accounts Total	**$ 8,826.92**
Total LSR Net Worth	**$38,256.92**

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth
Funds for the Bob Clarke Award $ 570.00

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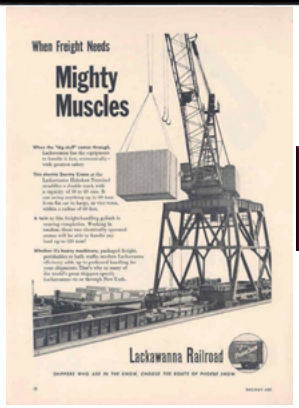

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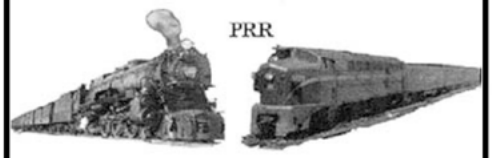

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